



FIGHTING FIT

MAYWEATHER vs PACQUIAO

We reveal the training secrets of 'Money' and Manny



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MEET THE 'KRUSHER'

Sergey Kovalev on Pascal, Stevenson and the Russian Army

MARCH 5 2015 *Every week*

THE WORLD'S BEST FIGHT MAGAZINE

WWW.BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET

BOXING NEWS

“

I WANT QUIGG NOW

”

Since 1909

RINGSIDE REPORTS

DRIVEN

Frampton and Fury clear a path to the big fights

“

GET ME KLITSCHKO

”

#MAYWEATHERPACQUIAO
8
WEEKS TO GO

£3.35 VOL. 71 NO. 10

ISSN 0006-8519



9 770006 851203

FREE KRONK HOODIE WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TO BOXING NEWS



FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY!
CHOICE FROM 2 COLOURS
The Kronk Detroit
NAVY OR DARK GREY



**WORTH
£34.99**

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE OF THE WORLD'S ONLY WEEKLY BOXING TITLE
HURRY WHILE STOCKS LAST

VISIT BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET/KRONK
OR CALL 01371 851888 & QUOTE BNKRONK15

Terms and Conditions: This offer is only available to new Boxing News subscribers on a 1 year print subscription. Offer only available with UK 1 year subscriptions (£97.50). Subscribers have a choice out of: (i) Kronk Detroit Navy (ii) Kronk Detroit Dark Grey. Customer must choose a size and colour at the checkout. The size and colour is subject to availability. This offer is not available to digital edition subscribers. Boxing News accepts no responsibility for any damage, loss, liabilities or disappointment incurred or suffered by a customer as a result of claiming the offer. Boxing News further disclaims liability for any damage to the product or resulting from participation in the offer. If the subscription that you purchased includes a free gift, please allow up to 6 weeks for delivery. For all enquiries, email: boxingnews@escosubs.co.uk or call 01371 851888. Offer available whilst stocks last.



BOXING Contents

March 5, 2015

14 HOMETOWN GLORY

Frampton takes care of Avalos in Belfast

HIGHLIGHTS

>> 8 NEWS

Luke Campbell talks about fighting on the Hull bill and training in the US

>> 18 ACTION

Fury nails Hammer until he is retired, while Eubank Jnr grabs a belt

>> 32 FEATURE

Sergey Kovalev speaks to Donald McRae about Stevenson and more

>> 36 FIGHTING FIT

We reveal what it's like to train with Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF & PETER CZIBORRA

18



HIGHLIGHTS

>> 4 BN COMMENT

Frampton and Fury take aim

>> 5 GUEST COLUMN

Eddie Hearn on Quigg-Frampton

>> 10 HEROES & VILLAINS

The week's highs and lows

>> 26 PREVIEWS

Paul Butler aims for a second world title against Zolani Tete

>> 30 LOOKING AHEAD

Two quality disputes herald Al Haymon's NBC debut

>> 40 AMATEURS

Gary Sweeney is coming for Darren O'Neill in 2016

>> 46 **60-SECOND INTERVIEW**
'I WEAR THE WHITE DOVE ON MY SHORTS AS A SIGN OF PEACE BETWEEN BOTH RELIGIONS'
James Tennyson

DOWNLOAD OUR APP TODAY

For more details visit

WWW.BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET/APPS

BOXING





BOXING NEWS

THE WORLD'S BEST FIGHT MAGAZINE

Established 1909 • March 5, 2015

Coming next week

● **A HUGE** amount of action, the vast majority of it reported from ringside as **Paul Butler** vies for his second world title in Liverpool, **Al Haymon's** new series kicks off with two good fights in Las Vegas and **Zou Shiming** goes for gold in Macau.

● **SERGEY KOVALEV** and **Jean Pascal** dispute light-heavyweight titles in Montreal and we have an in-depth preview of their clash.

● **DARREN BARKER** continues his technique series with a guide to the cross.

● **AVAILABLE** to download via iTunes and Google Play.



GO GET 'EM, BOYS

UK fighters showing the way when it comes to drive



AMBITION is to be respected, lauded even. The desire to improve oneself, to test our own limitations regardless of the inherent fear or risk, is an admirable quality.

Boxers are so often accused

of ducking their potential opposition that those who exemplify behaviour in direct contrast to this are rarely highlighted. Take **Tyson Fury**, for example ("Please do!" the wags among you may exclaim at this point). The confident traveller has long held a fervent belief that he can topple world heavyweight king **Wladimir Klitschko** and given he now occupies the mandatory contender slot for one of the belts the Ukrainian holds, Fury will likely be afforded the chance to test this hypothesis.

Some still perceive Fury [right] as a figure of fun, a 6ft 9in sideshow attraction to be mocked or humoured depending on his proximity. After 24 straight wins, 18 inside the distance and many against top European and fringe world-class opponents, the number of people laughing at Fury is at an all-time low. Aged just 26 and growing as an attraction, Fury could easily have waited in the wings, feasted on has-beens and wannabes before taking aim at the WBA 'regular' belt. But ambition is not always sensible or self-serving and it certainly does not pander to procrastination. Fury wants Klitschko next and if this proves impossible then he'd accept unbeaten WBC ruler **Deontay Wilder** instead.

Carl Frampton and **Scott Quigg** are similarly driven. IBF king Frampton's latest superb performance is reported from page 14.



'FURY COULD HAVE FEASTED ON HAS-BEENS AND WANNABES BEFORE TAKING AIM AT THE WBA 'REGULAR' BELT'

Given his status as a huge draw in Northern Ireland and recent link-up with ITV, Frampton, having despatched his mandatory contender **Chris Avalos** in stunning fashion last weekend (spoiler alert), could fight pretty much whoever he wanted next. WBA champ Quigg has yet to return from hand surgery and could be forgiven a tune-up fight at the very least. They are under no real pressure to meet each other this summer

but both men know that until they square off, questions will remain regarding who is Britain's best in their division (apologies to **Kid Galahad**).

Frampton and Quigg should be applauded for actively seeking a fight that hardcore fans have wanted to see for years. We hope promoters and TV companies provide a helping hand, rather than a roadblock in making this happen and Quigg's promoter, **Eddie Hearn** (see facing page), certainly seems keen to facilitate the clash.

Elsewhere, albeit still in the UK, **Kell Brook** wants **Amir Khan**, **Paul Butler** on Friday aims for a second world title aged only 26 (see page 26) and **Chris Eubank Jr** has just bagged an Interim world belt in his first fight back from what could have been a disheartening defeat to **Billy Joe Saunders**. There was no gradual rebuild for him. There is an epidemic of ambition running rife through

British boxers right now and the best we can hope for is that the real power-brokers in this sport bow to their fighters' self-belief and do all they can to enable them to fulfil their dreams.

Follow us and keep up to date



@BoxingNewsED



BoxingNewsOnline

WASTED TALENT

● IT looks like the end for Cuban heavyweight **Odlanier Solis** after he refused to come out for the ninth round of his rematch with veteran American **Tony Thompson** in Turkey last Friday (February 27). A 2004 Olympic gold medallist and triple World amateur champion, big things were expected of the Miami-based Havana native when he turned professional in 2007. Instead, the 34-year-old has illustrated perfectly the saying, "Hard work without talent is a shame, but talent without hard work is a tragedy."

Despite suffering a split decision defeat to Thompson in March, Solis was clearly not motivated for revenge in his return bout with the 43-year-old southpaw. **Odlanier** weighed in at a career-heaviest 271 3/4lbs, which was 14 1/2lbs more than he had scaled for the initial clash. Reports suggest that Solis only completed 18 days of proper training leading up to the contest.

Considering his rapid fall from grace during the last eight years, it seems appropriate that the biggest fight of Solis' pro career – against then-WBC champion **Vitali Klitschko** in March 2011 – ended in disappointment after less than three minutes. His is a regretful tale, and one which serves as a warning to those who believe success can be achieved with talent alone.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



MY MAN:
Hearn [far right]
with Quigg
and trainer
Joe Gallagher

WE ALL WANT QUIGG-FRAMPTON

Talks have begun and it should happen



Eddie Hearn

Quigg's
promoter

Always the atmosphere in Belfast was fantastic. Carl Frampton was excellent, Chris Avalos was disappointing but perhaps that was because Carl was so good. He was strong, clever and showed great footwork. Regarding our split from Frampton in 2013, I had a chance to continue as his co-promoter with Barry McGuigan but it didn't feel right. I don't have any regrets. He'll always be a great fighter and the atmosphere in Belfast will always be fantastic. There is no animosity, I'm probably not on their Christmas card list but I have a fighter in Scott Quigg who is one part of one of the biggest fights in British boxing at the moment.

I had a good chat on Monday (March 2) with Jake McGuigan. Barry is very emotional and passionate which I like, but sometimes he lets his heart take over. I've had a lot of discussions with Jake, who has a cool head. All of us know we want to make the fight.

There are three main issues to resolve: location, purse split and broadcaster.



It's our job on both sides to maximise the earnings of our fighter. It's about where can we get the most numbers, drive the most revenue on the gate and, from a TV perspective, what the offers are. They will talk to ITV, I'll talk to Sky, then we'll meet this week and have a chat. Neither fighter wants less than a 50-50 split. Frampton is the bigger draw right now, both are world champions but they need each other. Maybe the winner gets a larger split – 60-40, say – I think both would go for that.

I'd like it at the end of June, possibly early July, though that's not as good for Belfast because it's marching season. But it doesn't have to be in Belfast, even London, Loftus Road – where Barry won his world title – would be a nice story. I think Frampton [left with trainer Shane McGuigan] against Quigg has grown into a pay-per-view fight, even more so after Carl's performance on Saturday.

As for Amir Khan-Kell Brook, I believe it will happen but not this summer. Amir is talking about fighting in mid-May, Kell will next fight, after March 28, in June or July. It's frustrating as summer is the perfect time.

When you look at what my dad did with Chris Eubank's world tour, some of the opponents, you can't get away with it now due to the demands of the modern-day fan. There's more pressure now than ever to make the big fights.

'I THINK FRAMPTON AGAINST QUIGG HAS GROWN INTO A PAY-PER-VIEW FIGHT'



BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET

WHAT'S HOT ON OUR WEBSITE...



AND NEW...

Veteran ref Mickey Vann has praise for recently crowned champ Chris Eubank Jr



THEOPHANE'S MOVE

Ashley is part of Mayweather Promotions and hopes to be back in May



WHAT'S NEXT?

Miguel Cotto and Amir Khan have decisions to make regarding their next fights



OMAR FIGUEROA

The unbeaten Texan talks about his next bout, against Ricky Burns on May 9

SUBSCRIBE
today and get

5 ISSUES
FOR
FREE

call 01371 851888

quote BN5IM114

or visit

BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET





TWEETS

@HENNESSYSPORTS

Tyson and Elvis in the building?! What more do you want? #FuryHammer MICK HENNESSY is delighted as his fighter/singer marches on.

@MRDAVIDHAYE

Bumped into Chris Avalos at the airport. Great to see him in high spirits. What a gallant performance. Future champ. DAVID HAYE recognises a game effort in Belfast.

@MARAVILLABOX

Only the best version of Rigo has a little chance of victory over @RealCFrampton. I believe Carl is the MAN at 122. Former middle champ SERGIO MARTINEZ is impressed by 'The Jackal'.

@SPIKE_OSULLIVAN

Even Billy Joe Saunders wants to see me and Chris Eubank Jr get it on. Irish middleweight GARY O'SULLIVAN, fresh from a win in Boston, calls out the new champ.

@

KEITHFTHURMANJR

Took sparring partners for thank you dinner last night. Gonna give them final round for dessert today! One week to go! Florida's welter puncher KEITH THURMAN shows his generous side.

@LARABOXING

I hope the GREAT @RealMiguelCotto picks me for the fans! @Timbradleyjr is a good boxer but I would beat him with one hand! #AmericanDream Cuba's ERISLANDY LARA stakes his claim to be Cotto's next opponent.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

FIGHT OF THE CENTURY



FINALLY, the long-awaited superfight between Floyd Mayweather and Manny

Pacquiao is on. This will be a truly great sporting occasion, with the two best pound-for-pound boxers battling it out to decide who is number one.

The fight should have happened five years ago, but it might turn out to be an even better scrap now that both fighters have slowed down slightly.

We can expect the very best from each fighter, but I think Mayweather's superb timing and defence will cancel out Pacquiao's speed and power. I lean towards Mayweather on points, as I don't think he'd have accepted this fight unless he was totally convinced he'd prevail. However, only time will reveal the outcome.

Patch Hammond, Norwich

REMEMBERING BAILEY

BOXING in North Wales was rocked by the news that Martyn Bailey passed away at the very young age of 39 on Thursday February 19.

The Wrexham fighter was a former British Masters middleweight champion, who won the title with an impressive knockout of Lee Murtagh, before making two successful defences, including a stunning stoppage of Darren Dorrington.

Injuries ended Martyn's career after the Dorrington fight and he never got the opportunity to move on to the next level, but everyone in the area was very proud of what he achieved.

Martyn was always grateful that he had the opportunity to box professionally and he loved every minute of it. I trained

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS/MARK HUNDLEY



ALL IN THE TIMING:
Mayweather [right]
catches Alvarez

him throughout his career and he was managed by my father, Richard Jones. We were both devastated when we heard the news of his passing.

Martyn was a true professional and gentleman who will be very sorely missed. Our thoughts are with his family, particularly his wife Dawn and children Josh and Rio.

Damian Jones, via e-mail

RIP ERNEST

I'd like to send my condolences to the family and friends of Exeter's Kurt Ernest, who passed away on February 22.

He was a very good boxer who fought Dave Charnley in 1955.

Gordon White, Exmouth

THE KAZAKH HAGLER

WE can all see the defensive flaws in Gennady Golovkin, but these get put to the wayside when you possess the type of relentlessness and power that he does. He strikes me as almost Marvin Hagleresque! Much respect should go out to Martin Murray though. He's fought a peak Felix Sturm in Germany, Sergio Martinez in Argentina and now Golovkin.

David Oldham, via email

WE ASKED...



WHO IS THE WORLD'S BEST LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT?



TOM STRETTON

Without a shadow of a doubt it's Kovalev. Would love to see him and Carl Froch. That would be a tear-up to remember and I would favour Kovalev.

ROBERT ARIAS

As much as I like Kovalev, I'd have to say Stevenson beats him now. They both have great power, but Stevenson is the more skilful boxer and his

defence is better; Kovalev is there to get hit. Kovalev fights flat-footed, Stevenson on the other hand has great foot movement.

GEORGE WOOD

Stevenson is ahead. Not by much but enough to beat the present crop. Stevenson is not dodging anybody but I'd like to see him fight Kovalev.

89% **SERGEY KOVALEV**

10% **ADONIS STEVENSON**

0.7% **JUERGEN BRAEHMER**

0.3% **JEAN PASCAL**



HEAD-2-HEAD

KEITH THURMAN VS ADRIEN BRONER

Who wins this mouthwatering welterweight match?

STE VO

Thurman in six. Broner has great reflexes but is far too stationary for a fighter like Thurman.

FRANK MASELLI

Broner all day - too quick, too strong and can switch stances. Thurman is open on the backfoot.

DAVID MOYTE

Thurman, because he is smart and adapts to his opponents. He is multi-dimensional and has power.

RICARDO RIVERA

Broner, because he has faster hands and is battle-tested, while Thurman isn't.

WINDELL CLARK

Thurman. Broner tends to abandon the fundamentals and get flashy, while Thurman can slug it out or box when he has to.

MALCOLM LEWIS GRIFFIN JR

Thurman, if he can cut the ring off and control Broner's movement. But Broner is fast and does have a punch.

THE PANEL

WHO DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT IN THE WORLD?



Glenn McCrory

Former IBF cruiser champ

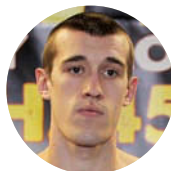
It's between Sergey Kovalev and Adonis Stevenson. If they were to fight, I think Kovalev would break Stevenson down. He demolishes his opponents. Look how he dominated Bernard Hopkins.



Willie Monroe Jr

Middleweight contender

I think the best light-heavyweight is definitely Sergey Kovalev. He's proven that he's elite and more than just a puncher. He counters well, has boxing ability, and can fight for 12 rounds.



Tommy Karpency

Ex-WBO 175lb title challenger

It's out of Sergey Kovalev and Adonis Stevenson. I'd probably go with Kovalev, because he's got more world titles than Stevenson. The Kovalev-Jean Pascal fight will tell us more.



Jeremy Bates

Retired US heavyweight

After what he did to Bernard Hopkins last year and the way he dealt with him, the best light-heavyweight in the world currently is undoubtedly Sergey Kovalev.

WOULD YOU RATHER SEE TYSON FURY FIGHT WLAD KLITSCHKO OR DEONTAY WILDER?

Glenn McCrory

Former IBF cruiser champ

I'd rather see Fury fight Wilder. It'd be great to see two tough young guys going toe to toe. It'd be an exciting tear-up between those two, then the winner could face Klitschko for all the titles.

Willie Monroe Jr

Middleweight contender

To be honest, out of those three guys, Fury wouldn't be in my favourite fight. I'd rather see Wilder take on Klitschko, and I think Wilder would knock him out inside seven rounds.

Tommy Karpency

Ex-WBO 175lb title challenger

I'd like to see Fury against Wilder. I think it'd be a better fight for the fans than Fury-Klitschko. There'd be more action and excitement.

Jeremy Bates

Retired US heavyweight

I'd prefer to see Fury face Wilder than Klitschko. A fight between those two would truly show the world who the number one contender for the heavyweight title really is.

10 COUNT

MULTI MARVELS

Daniel Herbert lists Brits with a world title at more than one weight

1 BOB FITZSIMMONS

Cornish-born and New Zealand-raised, "Ruby Robert" reigned at middle, heavy and light-heavy, in that order.

2 DUKE MCKENZIE

The stylish Croydon boxer won the IBF belt at fly followed by WBO straps at both bantam and super-bantam.

3 DAVID HAYE

Big-punching "Hayemaker" unified at cruiserweight before wrestling the WBA heavyweight belt from 7ft 2in Nikolay Valuev.

4 JOE CALZAGHE

Newbridge southpaw ruled the super-middles for a decade before adding *The Ring* magazine belt at light-heavy.

5 RICKY HATTON

Not many remember that "The Hitman" added the WBA welter crown to his world title reign at light-welterweight.

6 CHRIS EUBANK SNR

WBO crowns at both 160lbs and 168lbs back in the 1990s underlined the class of the monocol talent from Hove.

7 NIGEL BENN

Hard-hitting, relentless aggression earned the "Dark Destroyer" global titles at middleweight (WBO) and super-middle (WBC).

8 PAUL WEIR

Between 1993 and 1996, this gritty little Scot achieved WBO title recognition at both strawweight and light-fly.

9 DIGGER STANLEY

This clever-boxing gypsy was world bantam king around 1906-12 but had previously claimed flyweight status before that division was universally accepted.

10 RICKY BURNS

After holding WBO belts at 130lbs and 135lbs, this Coatbridge man is still active at light-welterweight.

'IT'D BE AN EXCITING TEAR-UP, THEN THE WINNER COULD FACE KLITSCHKO'

IN BRIEF

CHAGAIEV-BROWNE IN OZ?

SYDNEY-BASED 35-year-old **Lucas Browne** could headline a world title show in Australia if promoter **Ricky Hatton** wins the purse bid for his challenge to 'regular' WBA world heavyweight champion **Ruslan Chagaev**.

The WBA named the unbeaten Aussie as Chagaev's mandatory last week and gave both parties 30 days to negotiate a deal.

"If Ricky wins the bid it'd be great to have a show in Sydney or Melbourne," said Browne's manager, **Matt Clark**.

NEIL DEVEY

SOEELY MISSED

KURT ERNEST passed away on February 22. He started boxing at Exeter Boxing Club and during his national service became RAF and Imperial Services champion, as well as representing England. He had a 29-fight pro career, which included a loss to **Dave Charnley**. After his fighting days were over, he excelled as an amateur coach at his original club Exeter.

Paul Dunne, another great boxing man, died on the same day. Dunne, whose career as a pro concluded in 1952, was the chief coach of Sale West ABC, where he trained two-weight world champion **Ricky Hatton**. Via social media Hatton said, "There wouldn't have been a Ricky Hatton if it wasn't for this man. RIP Mr Dunne. I love you."

OSCAR DIAZ PASSES

SAN ANTONIO'S former welterweight contender **Oscar Diaz**, who was forced to quit boxing after suffering a brain injury during a fight with **Delvin Rodriguez** almost seven years ago, passed away on Thursday February 26, aged 32, with the exact cause of death unconfirmed.

After collapsing ahead of the 11th round of his bout with Rodriguez in July 2008, Diaz spent two months in a coma. Following emergency brain surgery, doctors were unsure how he would recover. It was reported recently that the Texan had been living in a nursing home in his hometown and could not walk unassisted.

CAMPBELL FINDS PEACE

With his father seriously ill, Luke is using boxing to focus his mind, writes **John Dennen**

A BOXING ring is rarely a peaceful place. But at the moment for **Luke Campbell**, a fight will be a refuge from what he's facing outside the ropes. His father is gravely ill and Luke initially had to withdraw from Saturday's (March 7) show in his hometown of Hull.

But Campbell has decided to fight on.

"It's a good switch-off, that's for sure," Luke said of the bout. "It gives me something to focus on. I'm excited about it. My family are happy that I'm boxing. It's a bit of normality."

Campbell had been in training and eventually decided to return to action.

"My team and myself had a think about it," he stated. "We thought, if I'm mentally right then let's do it. I'm ready to get back out there and do what I do best."

The unbeaten 27-year-old southpaw hasn't boxed competitively since October, when he dominated **Daniel Brizuela**, but he has trained diligently. Indeed, earlier this year he went over to America to put in some work with Cuban coach

Jorge Rubio. He learned "all sorts of little bits and bobs", saying, "It was just good to get out of your comfort zone and put yourself in different situations."

Campbell wanted to see Rubio because the Cuban is **Guillermo Rigondeaux's** trainer. "He's one of my favourite fighters. I think he's the best fighter on the planet," Luke opined.

Campbell will get an opponent at short notice for this weekend, the 11-1-

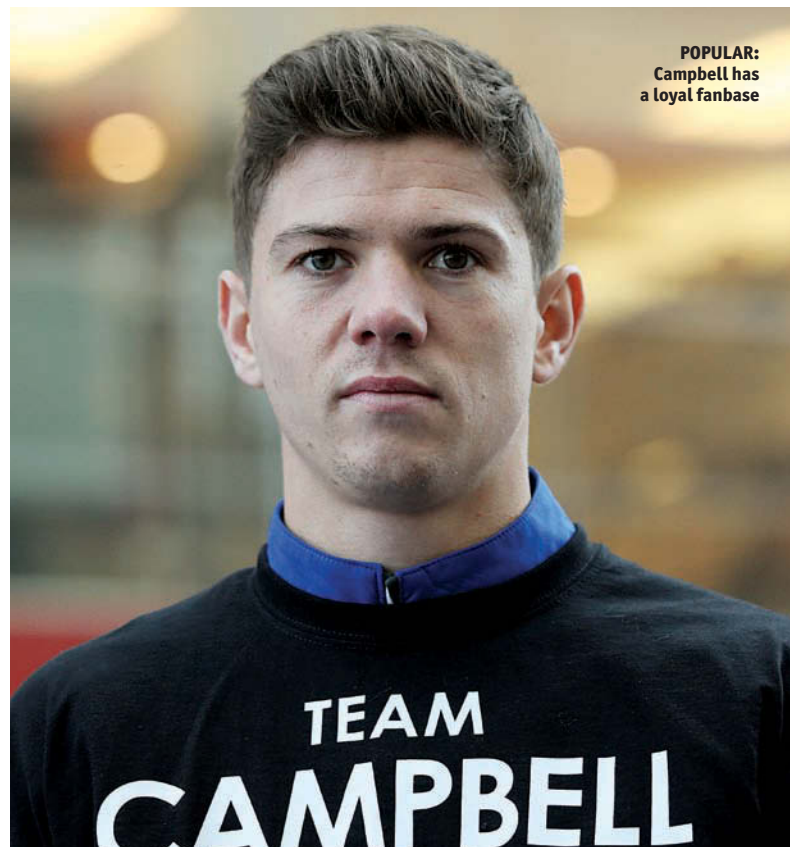
1 Nicaraguan

Levis Morales is most likely in the frame, but Luke is unruffled. "You've just got to get on with it," said the 2012 Olympic gold medallist.

While the simpler problems of a boxing match might clear his mind for however long the fight lasts, Luke can also take comfort in the warm reception he enjoys from the Hull faithful. "When I went back on the show, everybody started buying tickets again and it showed that I've got a real loyal support from fans, which is really nice to know," he said.

**'MY FAMILY ARE
HAPPY THAT I'M
BOXING. IT'S A BIT
OF NORMALITY'**

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/LEE SMITH



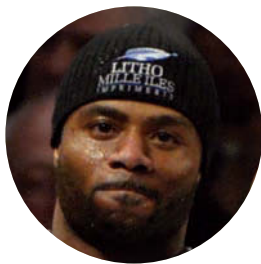
POPULAR:
Campbell has
a loyal fanbase

WHISPERS

THE two most famous fighters in the world begun their training camps this week for their Las Vegas superfight on May 2. **Manny Pacquiao** flew into Los Angeles on Sunday (March 1) to begin his preparations. He posted on his Instagram account: "Just arrived here in LA, excited to focus [on] training for the fight." Meanwhile, **Floyd Mayweather** wrote on his Twitter page on the same day: "Day one of training camp starts tomorrow."

A LIGHT-WELTERWEIGHT war has been confirmed for Saturday April 18 at Turning Stone Resort & Casino in Verona, New York, when Argentine banger **Lucas Matthyse** meets relentless Russian **Ruslan Provodnikov** over 12 rounds. HBO will televise the fight, which is being co-promoted by Banner Promotions, Golden Boy Promotions and Arano Box.

MATCHROOM BOXING and Team Sauerland have agreed a TV rights deal which will see 12 world title fights in Germany broadcast live on Sky Sports and the Matchroom Fight Pass, with the Nordic Fight Night series also shown on the Fight Pass. Matchroom's 20 shows on Sky Sports can be broadcast by the ProSiebenSat.1 media group in Germany on either SAT.1 television or its online platforms.

**HEAVYWEIGHT**

over 200lbs/14st 4lbs

- 1 **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** 63-3 (UKR)
- 2 **ALEXANDER POVETKIN** 28-1 (RUS)
- 3 **DEONTAY WILDER** 33-0 (USA)
- 4 **KUBRAT PULEV** 20-1 (BGR)
- 5 **VYACHESLAV GLAZKOV** 19-0-1 (UKR)
- 6 **BERMANE STIVERNE** 24-2-1 (CAN)
- 7 **CARLOS TAKAM** 30-2-1 (CMR)
- 8 **TONY THOMPSON** 40-5 (USA)
- 9 **TYSON FURY** 24-0 (ENG)
- 10 **CHRIS ARREOLA** 35-4 (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHT

200lbs/14st 4lbs

- 1 **MARCO HUCK** 38-2-1 (GER)
- 2 **YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ** 29-1 (CUB)
- 3 **OLA AFOLABI** 21-3-4 (ENG)
- 4 **GRIGORY DROZD** 39-1 (RUS)
- 5 **DENIS LEBEDEV** 26-2 (RUS)
- 6 **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK** 49-3-1 (POL)
- 7 **FIRAT ARSLAN** 34-8-2 (GER)
- 8 **THABISO MCHUNU** 17-1 (RSA)
- 9 **RAKHIM CHAKHKIEV** 21-1 (RUS)
- 10 **TONY BELLEW** 23-2-1 (ENG)

LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHT

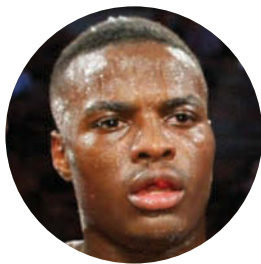
175lbs/12st 7lbs

- 1 **SERGEY KOVALEV** 26-0-1 (RUS)
- 2 **ADONIS STEVENSON** 25-1 (CAN)
- 3 **BERNARD HOPKINS** 55-7-2 (USA)
- 4 **JEAN PASCAL** 29-2-1 (CAN) *[above]*
- 5 **JUERGEN BRAEHMER** 45-2 (GER)
- 6 **ANDRZEJ FONFARA** 26-3 (POL)
- 7 **ARTUR BETERBIEV** 7-0 (RUS)
- 8 **TOMMY KARPENCY** 24-4-1 (USA)
- 9 **CHAD STURM** 32-4 (USA)
- 10 **ISAAC CHILEMBA** (23-2-2)

SUPER-MIDDLEWEIGHT

168lbs/12st

- 1 **CARL FROCH** 33-2 (ENG)
- 2 **ARTHUR ABRAHAM** 42-4 (GER)
- 3 **ROBERT STIEGLITZ** 47-4-1 (GER)
- 4 **GEORGE GROVES** 21-2 (ENG)
- 5 **ANTHONY DIRRELL** 27-0-1 (USA)
- 6 **SAKIO BIKA** 32-6-3 (AUS)
- 7 **JAMES DEGALE** 20-1 (ENG)
- 8 **FELIX STURM** 39-4-3 (GER)
- 9 **GILBERTO RAMIREZ** 31-0 (MEX)
- 10 **ANDRE DIRRELL** 23-1 (USA)

**MIDDLEWEIGHT**

160lbs/11st 6lbs

- 1 **MIGUEL COTTO** 39-4 (PRI)
- 2 **GENNADY GOLOVKIN** 32-0 (KAZ)
- 3 **SERGIO MARTINEZ** 51-3-2 (ARG)
- 4 **DANIEL GEALE** 31-3 (AUS)
- 5 **JERMAIN TAYLOR** 33-4-1 (USA)
- 6 **SAM SOLIMAN** 44-12 (AUS)
- 7 **MARTIN MURRAY** 29-2-1 (ENG)
- 8 **PETER QUILLIN** 31-0 (USA) *[above]*
- 9 **ANDY LEE** 34-2 (IRL)
- 10 **DAVID LEMIEUX** 33-2 (CAN)

LIGHT-MIDDLEWEIGHT

154lbs/11st

- 1 **SAUL ALVAREZ** 44-1-1 (MEX)
- 2 **ERISLANDY LARA** 20-2-2 (CUB)
- 3 **AUSTIN TROUT** 28-2 (USA)
- 4 **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE** 34-5 (USA)
- 5 **CARLOS MOLINA** 22-6-2 (USA)
- 6 **ISHE SMITH** 26-7 (USA)
- 7 **DEMETRIUS ANDRADE** 21-0 (USA)
- 8 **VANES MARTIROSYAN** 35-1-1 (USA)
- 9 **JERMELL CHARLO** 25-0 (USA)
- 10 **JERMALL CHARLO** 20-0 (USA)

WELTERWEIGHT

147lbs/10st 7lbs

- 1 **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** 47-0 (USA)
- 2 **MANNY PACQUIAO** 57-5-2 (PHL)
- 3 **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 31-1-1 (USA)
- 4 **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** 56-7-1 (MEX)
- 5 **KELL BROOK** 33-0 (ENG)
- 6 **AMIR KHAN** 30-3 (ENG)
- 7 **SHAWN PORTER** 24-1-1 (USA)
- 8 **MARCOS MAIDANA** 35-5 (ARG)
- 9 **ROBERT GUERRERO** 32-2-1 (USA)
- 10 **DEVON ALEXANDER** 26-3 (USA)

LIGHT-WELTERWEIGHT

140lbs/10st

- 1 **DANNY GARCIA** 29-0 (USA)
- 2 **LUCAS MATTHYSSE** 36-3 (ARG)
- 3 **LAMONT PETERSON** 33-2-1 (USA)
- 4 **CHRIS ALGIERI** 20-1 (USA)
- 5 **RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV** 24-3 (RUS)
- 6 **JESSIE VARGAS** 26-0 (USA)
- 7 **VIKTOR POSTOL** 26-0 (UKR)
- 8 **KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV** 19-1 (RUS)
- 9 **JOSE BENAVIDEZ** 22-0 (USA)
- 10 **MAURICIO HERRERA** 21-5 (USA)

**LIGHTWEIGHT**

135lbs/9st 9lbs

- 1 **TERENCE CRAWFORD** 25-0 (USA)
- 2 **MICKEY BEY** 21-1-1 (USA) *[above]*
- 3 **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ** 34-4 (MEX)
- 4 **RICHAR ABRIL** 19-3-1 (CUB)
- 5 **RAYMUNDO BELTRAN** 29-7-1 (MEX)
- 6 **DEJAN ZLATICANIN** 20-0 (MNE)
- 7 **YURIORKIS GAMBOA** 24-1 (CUB)
- 8 **OMAR FIGUEROA** 24-0-1 (USA)
- 9 **KEVIN MITCHELL** 39-2 (ENG)
- 10 **DENIS SHAFIKOV** 35-1-1 (RUS)

SUPER-FEATHERWEIGHT

130lbs/9st 4lbs

- 1 **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA** 22-0-1 (JPN)
- 2 **TAKASHI MIURA** 28-2-2 (JPN)
- 3 **RANCES BARTHELEMY** 21-0 (CUB)
- 4 **FRANCISCO VARGAS** 21-0-1 (MEX)
- 5 **BRYAN VASQUEZ** 34-1 (CRI)
- 6 **SERGIO THOMPSON** 30-4 (MEX)
- 7 **ADRIAN ESTRELLA** 21-0 (MEX)
- 8 **ORLANDO SALIDO** 42-12-2 (MEX)
- 9 **JAVIER FORTUNA** 27-0-1 (DOM)
- 10 **JOSE PEDRAZA** 19-0 (PRI)

FEATHERWEIGHT

126lbs/9st

- 1 **JHONNY GONZALEZ** 57-8 (MEX)
- 2 **NICHOLAS WALTERS** 25-0 (JAM)
- 3 **NONITO DONAIRE** 33-3 (PHL)
- 4 **SIMPIWE VETYEKA** 26-3 (RSA)
- 5 **ABNER MARES** 28-1-1 (MEX)
- 6 **EVGENY GRADOVICH** 20-0 (RUS)
- 7 **VASYL LOMACHENKO** 3-1 (UKR)
- 8 **JAYSON VELEZ** 22-0-1 (PRI)
- 9 **JESUS CUELLAR** 26-1 (ARG)
- 10 **ROBINSON CASTELLANOS** 21-10 (MEX)

SUPER-BANTAMWEIGHT

122lbs/8st 10lbs

- 1 **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 15-0 (CUB)
- 2 **CARL FRAMPTON** 20-0 (NIR)
- 3 **LEO SANTA CRUZ** 29-0-1 (MEX)
- 4 **SCOTT QUIGG** 30-0-2 (ENG)
- 5 **KIKO MARTINEZ** 32-5 (SPA)
- 6 **CHRIS AVALOS** 25-3 (USA)
- 7 **GENESIS SERVANIA** 26-0 (PHL)
- 8 **ANDRES GUTIERREZ** 31-0-1 (MEX)
- 9 **ENRIQUE QUEVEDO** 16-7-1 (MEX)
- 10 **HISASHI AMAGASA** 28-5-2 (JPN)

BANTAMWEIGHT

118lbs/8st 6lbs

- 1 **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA** 22-0-2 (JPN)
- 2 **JUAN CARLOS PAYANO** 16-0 (DOM)
- 3 **ANSELMO MORENO** 35-3-1 (PAN)
- 4 **KOKI KAMEDA** 33-1 (JPN)
- 5 **JAMIE McDONNELL** 25-2-1 (ENG)
- 6 **TOMOKI KAMEDA** 31-0 (JPN)
- 7 **MALCOLM TUNACAO** 35-3-3 (PHL)
- 8 **RANDY CABALLERO** 22-0 (USA)
- 9 **JULIO CEJA** 28-1 (MEX)
- 10 **RODRIGO GUERRERO** 22-5-1 (MEX)

**SUPER-FLYWEIGHT**

115lbs/8st 3lbs

- 1 **NAOYA INOUE** 8-0 (JPN)
- 2 **OMAR ANDRES NARVAEZ** 43-2-2 (ARG)
- 3 **CARLOS CUADRAS** 31-0-1 (MEX)
- 4 **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI** 32-4-1 (THA)
- 5 **ZOLANI TETE** 19-3 (RSA)
- 6 **KOHEI KONO** 30-8-1 (JPN)
- 7 **NORBERTO JIMENEZ** 20-8-4 (DOM)
- 8 **DAVID SANCHEZ** 27-2-2 (MEX)
- 9 **ARTHUR VILLANUEVA** 26-0 (PHL)
- 10 **FELIPE ORUCUTA** 29-3 (MEX)

FLYWEIGHT

112lbs/8st

- 1 **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 41-0 (NIC) *[above]*
- 2 **JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA** 31-2 (MEX)
- 3 **BRIAN VILORIA** 35-4 (USA)
- 4 **EDGAR SOSA** 51-8 (MEX)
- 5 **GIOVANI SEGURA** 32-4-1 (MEX)
- 6 **AMNAT RUENROENG** 14-0 (THA)
- 7 **JUAN CARLOS REVECO** 35-1 (ARG)
- 8 **MORUTI MTHALANE** 31-2 (RSA)
- 9 **MCWILLIAMS ARROYO** 15-2 (PRI)
- 10 **YODMONGKOL VOR SAENGTHPE** 34-3 (THA)

LIGHT-FLYWEIGHT

108lbs/7st 10lbs

- 1 **DONNIE NIETES** 34-1-4 (PHL)
- 2 **PEDRO GUEVARA** 24-1-1 (MEX)
- 3 **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ** 30-3-1 (MEX)
- 4 **MOISES FUENTES** 20-2-1 (MEX)
- 5 **RYOICHI TAGUCHI** 21-2-1 (JPN)
- 6 **ALBERTO ROSSEL** 32-9 (PER)
- 7 **JAVIER MENDOZA** 23-2-1 (MEX)
- 8 **GANIGAN LOPEZ** 25-5 (MEX)
- 9 **REY LORETO** 19-13 (PHL)
- 10 **RAMON GARCIA HIRALES** 20-5-1 (MEX)

STRAWWEIGHT

105lbs/7st 7lbs

- 1 **HEKKIE BUDLER** 28-1 (RSA)
- 2 **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN** 37-0 (THA)
- 3 **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA** 28-7 (JPN)
- 4 **OSWALDO NOVOA** 14-5-1 (MEX)
- 5 **XIONG ZHAO ZHONG** 24-6-1 (CHN)
- 6 **KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART** 9-0 (THA)
- 7 **CARLOS BUITRAGO** 27-1-1 (NIC)
- 8 **KOSEI TANAKA** 4-0 (JPN)
- 9 **DENVER CUELLO** 34-5-6 (PHL)
- 10 **EDUARDO MARTINEZ** 11-2-1 (MEX)

POUND-FOR-POUND

The best of the best

- 1 **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** 47-0 (USA)
- 2 **MANNY PACQUIAO** 57-5-2 (PHL)
- 3 **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 31-1-1 (USA)
- 4 **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** 56-7-1 (MEX)
- 5 **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** 15-0 (CUB)
- 6 **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** 63-3 (UKR)
- 7 **SERGEY KOVALEV** 26-0-1 (RUS)
- 8 **CARL FROCH** 33-2 (ENG)
- 9 **MIGUEL COTTO** 39-4 (PRI)
- 10 **ROMAN GONZALEZ** 41-0 (NIC)

● If a fighter has been inactive for over a year, he will not be included in the rankings, unless he has a fight officially scheduled.

● Each fighter is ranked on the results they have achieved in their own specific weight division (excluding the pound-for-pound list).

● A fighter cannot be ranked in a specific weight division until he has competed in that division.

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF

BLISTERING:
Frampton salutes the crowd after blazing a trail towards Quigg

'THE IBF CHAMPION IS RAPIDLY BECOMING A STANDOUT STAR'



The *Boxing News* team bring you their weekly thoughts

HERO OF THE WEEK

NICK BOND

Can only be one man for me: Carl Frampton. His blistering showing on ITV against Chris Avalos can only strengthen the case for a unification clash with Scott Quigg.

MATT CHRISTIE @MattCBoxingNews

Frampton for the astonishing ease with which he dispatched Avalos in Belfast.

DANNY FLEXEN @DannyF_BoxingNews

Chris Eubank Jnr for redeeming himself from the Billy Joe Saunders defeat with an exciting win over Dmitry Chudinov.

JOHN DENNEN @BoxingNewsJD

Frampton's supporters. The atmosphere at the Odyssey Arena was incredible, and the champion did his bit with a dominant performance.

PAUL WHEELER @PaulWheelerBN

Frampton was scintillating in Belfast. The IBF super-bantamweight champion is rapidly becoming a standout star.

VILLAIN OF THE WEEK

NICK BOND

For allegedly gobbing chewing gum at Carl Frampton, my vote goes to Chris Avalos' mother. Say no more.

MATT CHRISTIE @MattCBoxingNews

The overweight Odlanier Solis blew it again versus Tony Thompson. Anyone who witnessed the Cuban as an amateur will be astonished his professional career has been such a mess.

DANNY FLEXEN @DannyF_BoxingNews

Ahmet Patterson's immune system which allowed a virus to infect the welterweight and force the postponement of

his intriguing bout with Glenn Foot.

JOHN DENNEN @BoxingNewsJD

Avalos was not on a charm offensive in Belfast. But he also discovered annoying Frampton is a bad idea.

PAUL WHEELER @PaulWheelerBN

The illness that forced Patterson to withdraw from his scheduled welterweight bout with Foot on the Tyson Fury-Christian Hammer undercard. It would've been an intriguing clash of styles.

WHICH FIGHT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO AT THE WEEKEND AND WHY?

NICK BOND

Sam Eggington is gaining momentum and the young welterweight will look to continue his recent run of stoppage victories against the unbeaten Shayne Singleton. Should be a good tussle.

MATT CHRISTIE

@MattCBoxingNews

Paul Butler gets the chance to snare his second world title against Zolani Tete in Liverpool.

DANNY FLEXEN

@DannyF_BoxingNews

Robert Guerrero-Keith Thurman is a great match but could be messy, so I'll go for Butler-Tete, a clash of skilful boxers.

JOHN DENNEN

@BoxingNewsJD

Butler getting the chance to make some history against Tete. Should be a high-quality fight too.

PAUL WHEELER

@PaulWheelerBN

Ex-IBF bantamweight king Butler is looking to make history by becoming the first Brit in over 100 years to claim a second world championship in a lighter division. Tete will be no pushover, though.

WE'RE IN AN IDEAL WORLD. CARL FRAMPTON FIGHTS SCOTT QUIGG, AND GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX MEETS LEO SANTA CRUZ WITH THE WINNERS FIGHTING EACH OTHER. WHO EMERGES VICTORIOUS?

NICK BOND

Frampton edges Quigg on points in a classic (not a confident pick), Rigondeaux outboxes Santa Cruz and then the Cuban maestro repeats the trick against Frampton.

MATT CHRISTIE

@MattCBoxingNews

I change my mind about Frampton and Quigg every time they fight. So for now, I'd pick Frampton - who has looked sensational recently - in a gruelling affair. Rigondeaux defeats Santa Cruz before outsmarting Frampton in the final.

DANNY FLEXEN

@DannyF_BoxingNews

I've long thought Quigg has the style to beat Frampton in a close bout though I've been

wavering more recently, Rigondeaux easily defeats Santa Cruz and then, in a tougher battle, Quigg.

JOHN DENNEN

@BoxingNewsJD

I think Frampton-Quigg is a real 50-50 fight. Frampton can edge him out. Rigondeaux beats Santa Cruz and could nullify Frampton, who, with his power, would always be a threat.

PAUL WHEELER

@PaulWheelerBN

Frampton and Rigondeaux defeat Quigg and Santa Cruz respectively, before Carl wins the battle of "The Jackals".

Photo: CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK



FRAMPTON-AVALOS DREW 2 MILLION VIEWERS. GOOD OR BAD RESULT FOR BOXING?

NICK BOND

Definitely good.

MATT CHRISTIE

@MattCBoxingNews

It's a decent beginning for someone who is not, Northern Ireland notwithstanding, a household name.

DANNY FLEXEN

@DannyF_BoxingNews

Not great... disappointing figures given the numbers Amir Khan used to do on ITV.

JOHN DENNEN

@BoxingNewsJD

It might not be Barry McGuigan's 20 million but it's still a lot of people watching boxing.

PAUL WHEELER

@PaulWheelerBN

Those involved in the production may have hoped for higher figures, but an audience of two million people can't be a bad thing.

IS TYSON FURY RIGHT TO PURSUE WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO OR SHOULD DEONTAY WILDER COME NEXT?

NICK BOND

Yes, if he thinks he is the best heavyweight, it's only natural he should want to challenge the division leader.

MATT CHRISTIE

@MattCBoxingNews

He has always wanted to fight the best and that's admirable. But I'd like to see him in with Wilder next before chasing Klitschko. By then

Klitschko-Fury - for all the heavyweight gold - could be the biggest fight in boxing.

DANNY FLEXEN

@DannyF_BoxingNews

He is right because only beating Wlad will make Fury universally recognised as the best heavyweight in the world, even if Wilder would create the better spectacle.

JOHN DENNEN

@BoxingNewsJD

I'd like to see Wilder-Fury first. It would be a good fight, have a great build-up and actually prepare the eventual winner better for the shot at Klitschko.

PAUL WHEELER

@PaulWheelerBN

He has got every right to push for the Klitschko fight, as he's the WBO's

mandatory challenger. However, either contest would be a big money-maker for Fury and would give him a chance to secure a portion of the world title, so the future looks bright for Tyson.

EARNED HIS STRIPES:
Oosthuizen has had
battles both inside
and outside the ring



'WHAT RYNO DID WAS UNSPORTING'

Sam Corbishley speaks to Thomas Oosthuizen ahead of his South African derby with rival Liebenberg



BOKSBURG'S 26-year-old light-heavyweight southpaw Thomas Oosthuizen, 23-0-2 (14), faces Ryno Liebenberg over 12 rounds in a domestic grudge match next Saturday (March 14) at Emperors Palace in Kempton Park, South Africa.

What strengths does your upcoming opponent, Ryno Liebenberg, bring to the ring?

He's definitely going to be in shape, fit and strong at the weight. I've never fought him as an amateur or sparred him before, but I know he's going to come to win. However, I'll be very fit and ready to do my thing as well. I have to prepare for everything that he can bring, so I have to prepare to be faster and be ready to let my hands go with combinations.

You are fellow South Africans. There was some pushing and shoving between you at the press conference. Is there a genuine rivalry to this fight?

What Ryno did was unsporting. That wasn't nice of him. He was lucky we didn't go at it there – most probably he wouldn't have made it to the fight if I'd reacted.

Has this fight caught the public's imagination in your home country?

The people of South Africa are really looking forward to it – it's really grabbed the public's attention. There's a lot of interest in the fight, so we have to strut our stuff.

There are only a handful of South African fighters who are currently catching the eye on the world scene. Do you think you can become the best of the bunch?

Yes, definitely. I'm looking forward to hopefully becoming the best South African boxer in the world. That's my goal and I'm working hard to get there. If you want something, you have to take it. I'm pushing to be faster and stronger. Moving up from super-middleweight to light-heavyweight has helped me increase my punch power.

Your scheduled appearance on the Jean Pascal-Lucian Bute card in January 2014 was cancelled, with some reports suggesting this was a result of a motorcycle accident, while others said you had issues making weight due to a wayward lifestyle. Can you clear this up?

There was definitely some lifestyle stuff over Christmas, but I got injured in the bike accident and couldn't use my jab because the

skin had come off my elbows. My hip was badly bruised, but that's how sportsmen learn and I've definitely learnt from that.

The collapse of that fight signalled the end of your relationship with promoter Rodney Berman, of Golden Gloves Promotions. What were the reasons for the split?

It was because of the cancellation of that fight and the stuff surrounding it, like getting injured. Rodney is a very strict guy, so that was basically the situation.

You reconciled with Berman and rejoined his stable last April.

Did your six-week stint in rehab [for alcoholism] play a big part in helping to repair that relationship?

It was definitely good for me. I learned a lot from the counsellor there. He was somebody I could communicate with and understand. It definitely helped me a lot.

You recently moved up from super-middleweight to light-heavy. Why did you make this choice?

Well, I'm a young, growing guy, so my body is still filling out. However, if I need to in the future, I believe I can still make super-middle.

I just feel that there's a lot of interest and excitement around the light-heavy division at the moment, and that's where I want to dominate – where the competition is stiffest.

Your dedication has been questioned before. Has that given you extra motivation for this fight?

I wouldn't say it's been questioned, but the media point it out, you know? There's a difference in how I look in the ring now. I took the criticism as advice and made it work for myself.

If all goes to plan for you against Liebenberg, you could be in line for a spot on the Wladimir Klitschko-Bryant Jennings undercard on April 25 at Madison Square Garden in New York. Has this given you an extra boost in training?

Definitely. It's Madison Square Garden. Not many South African fighters have fought there before, so that would be a dream come true. It's given me extra hunger to make sure that I get there.

Is your main target in the light-heavy division to challenge either Sergey Kovalev or Adonis Stevenson?

If you box, you want to be the best. My dream is to unify the division, so hopefully God blesses me. Only God can help me with that, plus me working hard. If you ask for a blessing, you've got to prepare for a blessing.



NOTHING IN IT: Oosthuizen [right] draws with Brandon Gonzales in 2013

'I COULDN'T USE MY JAB BECAUSE THE SKIN HAD COME OFF MY ELBOWS'

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★ GOOD ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF

NOT HAVING IT:
Frampton [right] tears into
his mouthy challenger



Carl Frampton blasts away Chris Avalos and calls out big rival Scott Quigg

'THE JACKAL'S' ROAR



John Dennen
@BoxingNewsJD

RINGSIDE

⊕ BELFAST

FEBRUARY 28

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT

★★☆☆☆ UNDERCARD



T'S only me and you now, boy." IBF super-bantamweight champion **Carl Frampton** did not relate how he responded to **Chris Avalos'** greeting as they faced one another in the final moments before the fight began.

The dense-packed crowd around them at the Odyssey Arena in Belfast was perhaps an ample reply. The "Jackal's Den" had gone wild before their hero had even stepped into the ring. By the time the champion dispatched his brash American challenger that crowd was delirious with joy.

Over the course of the contest every Frampton success triggered an exultant roar, while the, admittedly few, hits the Californian scored prompted a howl. A fractious build-up to the fight had seen the American grapple briefly with the IBF super-bantamweight title-holder at the previous day's weigh-in. The spite carried over into the real business of the world title fight.

"I wanted to teach him some manners. He was very disrespectful to me. He didn't show me any respect," Frampton said coldly.

Carl took the centre of the ring at the first bell, though Avalos landed the first jab. They tussled in close but Frampton lobbed over a right hand that Avalos felt early on. From the start the champion's timing was superior, his right hook cracked into the body and Frampton moved back before Avalos could launch a reply. They exchanged furiously for a moment but Carl finished the round with a straight right that blasted across Chris' jaw.

"The plan was to box him and frustrate him at the start but after 30 seconds of the first round he was very, very slow.



Fury-Hammer

Tyson stays on course for Klitschko

PAGE 18



Burnett-Owusu

Early victory for Ulster's Ryan

PAGE 22



Jones-Cunningham

English eliminator ends too early

PAGE 24



FAR SUPERIOR: Frampton [left] is too quick and versatile for Avalos



JOYOUS NIGHT: Frampton stops Avalos and [below] poses with top target, Scott Quigg, while manager Barry McGuigan celebrates [inset]



RINGSIDE NOTE

● **SCOTT QUIGG** was on hand and confidence is high in Frampton's camp that they can fight next, in a high-profile clash on ITV. "I think the fight can be a 30,000-seat [event]. You could do it at the [Manchester Arena], the 02 in London is 19 or 20,000... Our sponsor CWM FX sponsor Chelsea so Stamford Bridge is only up the road from where he lives [in London]," said Barry McGuigan, Carl's mentor and manager. "We want the fight. We really want the fight. Let's do a Chris Eubank-Nigel Benn fight. It's a great fight on terrestrial TV and will make these kids superstars. Let's think about the game. Let's think about the possibilities of it being free to air."

'I WANTED TO TEACH HIM SOME MANNERS. HE WAS VERY DISRESPECTFUL TO ME'

Too slow to really hit me with anything," Frampton said. "I knew everything that was coming."

Nevertheless Avalos marched forward. He closed down Carl's space. A sudden right caught Frampton and he sidled round the ring, using his mobility. He heaved a left hook fully into the American's chin, a shot that could have levelled a less robust fighter.

All of a sudden Avalos walked away, signalling an injury. Frampton didn't indulge in any confusion, he pounced on the American. "I hit him and I had every right," Carl noted. Avalos had to recover his composure immediately to defend himself. He survived the crisis but turning his back could only bolster the Belfastman's confidence further.

He tried to contain Frampton in a clinch and worked hooks at Carl's body. But in close a heavy right uppercut knocked Chris' head up out of the hold. He attacked Avalos again with a long straight right. As it connected the crowd leapt out of their seats as if hit by an electric shock.

It was still too early for the champion to force Chris back. Avalos bored forward, pressing Frampton into the

ropes. But Carl let little through. He lashed the American with his left hook. Chris' own right hand fell short.

Frampton had marked up around his right eye and by the fourth session Avalos wouldn't back up. Chris clubbed at him but Carl moved off behind a right hook. A heavy straight right struck Avalos. Frampton shook him with a lovely left hook and slammed his cross in after it. Carl began to break his challenger apart. He walked through an uppercut and whipped Avalos back with hard shots. Chris tried to get back at him but well-timed hooks to his body stopped Avalos in his tracks. Both fighters breathed heavily, they'd fought at a high intensity. Frampton now took control. He bombed forward with a hefty one-two.

Avalos couldn't regroup in the fifth round. Frampton drove him into the ropes, opening up with salvos of straight shots. Chris reeled back beneath them, unable to escape. Carl harried him along the ropes, battering him down.

The Californian tried to hold his ground, readying a right to throw. Carl's own right hand hit straighter and harder. The shot rocked him. Avalos tried to sling another punch, leaving himself open and again Frampton was faster. His cross thundered in and Avalos wobbled on his feet, out of it. Referee Howard Foster darted between them in the nick of time to end it at 1-33 of the round.

"He was tough, he was still on his feet there. He was absolutely gone," Frampton reflected. "I think Howard Foster jumped in at exactly the right moment there, he could have got seriously hurt."

He still hadn't silenced Avalos entirely. "He was still talking when he was going,"

Carl laughed. "I don't know what he was saying but he was trying to say something."

The unrequired judges were Joseph Pasquale, Benoit Roussel and Phil Edwards.

The story of the fight took over Belfast for the weekend, beamed out on television screens or over the radio. Broadcast on ITV, it should be the perfect platform to launch Frampton to

a new level of fame. He wants the big domestic fight next, Scott Quigg, and he's prepared to come to England to make it.

"The fight's just been brewing. It's time to do it now. It has to happen now," Frampton declared. ➤



RINGSIDE NOTES

● **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX** casts a long shadow over the super-bantamweight division.

But McGuigan sees a weakness in the Cuban, who was dropped in his last fight. "If Frampton hits him, he'll knock him out. But he'll hit him when I want him to hit him. It's not an exciting fight at the minute, it's not something that attracts us. Quigg does, [WBC champion Leo] Santa Cruz does, that's a fight we want.

But this guy [Frampton] is the best super-bantamweight in the world and we're going to prove it," McGuigan noted. "We really feel like we want to go and box in England now and we'd like to go and box in America as well, but we want to try and get the timing right."

● **FRAMPTON** is a significant fighter in Belfast whose appeal spans across communities. He however plays it down. "I'm just being normal and I just happen to be married to a girl from a different religion. That's all. It's humbling if people look at it that way but I'm just being nice to people, treat people how you'd like to be treated yourself. That's it really," he said. And he's getting better as a fighter all the time. "I feel like there are slight improvements with each performance. I felt comfortable in there today. I felt comfortable with Kiko [Martinez] the last time, I felt even more comfortable tonight."

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF



SAD SIGHT: Vassell [left] is dominated by Plotnykov



WINNERS: Cacace [right] outscores Bustos, while Whyte knocks out Lobjanidze [left]



➤ It was sad to see **Denton Vassell** suffer over 12 rounds with **Viktor Plotnykov** for the vacant IBF Inter-Continental title. The Ukrainian curled round a long left hook in round one. Vassell's knees dipped beneath it, an alarming sign. From then on the Mancunian was under the cosh and too easy to hit. Denton kept himself in there but clinches marred much of the action. The contest ebbed away from him as Plotnykov subjected the Englishman to sustained punishment. In the 10th round Vassell ran at the Lviv man, trying to wing in a shot. Plotnykov clipped him and knocked him to the canvas. He beat referee Phil Edwards' count and persisted. Denton wandered onto shots, he just couldn't seem to steer clear of them.

In the 12th and last round a big left hook hurt him. Vassell shot in an

uppercut to keep Viktor off. A right had Denton going. He fell forward and the two tumbled into the ropes. Up on his feet as Mr. Edwards finished the count, Vassell still looked unsteady but he made it to the end of the fight. He had however been dominated.

Howard Foster scored it 118-108, Joseph Pasquale and Benoit Roussel agreed on 115-111, all three for Plotnykov.

Dillian Whyte's outing against Georgia's **Beka Lobjanidze** left the Brixton heavyweight frustrated. Whyte walked down Lobjanidze but in the second of their 10 scheduled rounds the Georgian flared into action, catching Dillian with a left hook and a straight

right. His feistiness proved short-lived. In the third Whyte clapped left hooks around Beka's ribs. Hurt by them, Beka hopped away along the outskirts of the ring. In the fourth round Whyte continued to target his body, putting

Lobjanidze down. Referee Phil Edwards counted him out at 1-10.

Not even Whyte was sure what the finishing blow had been. "I was hoping to impress today in

Belfast. We picked an undefeated guy because we thought he would come and fight. He just ran," Dillian said. "I hit him once or twice and he went down... I don't know what shot [did it]. He just sucks."

DENTON WANDERED ONTO SHOTS

JUST STARTING:
McCullough stops
Tatrishvili in just
69 seconds



Anthony Cacace, one of Frampton's stablemates, towered over Spain's **Santiago Bustos**. At the end of the second round the man from Belfast rocked Bustos with a left hook but the bell to end the session stopped him capitalising. In the third Cacace flung the Spaniard off his feet and referee Hugh Russell Jnr obliged him by ruling it a knockdown. Santiago tried to burst past Cacace's long reach. The Belfastman switched stances and caught him with powerful shots but in the last two rounds Bustos managed to break through, slugging hooks at Cacace in close. But he didn't dislodge Anthony's control, losing 80-71 after eight rounds.

Coalisland middleweight **Conrad Cummings** maintained his unbeaten ledger against **Roberto Palenzuela**. He was eager to impress the fans, getting caught square on at times and having to withstand flush uppercuts. But he drummed straight shots into the Spaniard. He was reckless at times, getting carried away with his own successes and also too often leaning forward into mauling clinches. He led well with his right though and backed it up with hard lefts that jolted Palenzuela's head back. His attacking bursts handed Roberto a first defeat as Conrad took the six-rounder 60-54 for referee Paul McCullough.

Straight away **Marco McCullough** hurt **Malkhaz Tatrishvili** with a long

cross. The local man bounced the right off the humble Georgian's head. That right did the damage, so much so that Tatrishvili turned on his heel to run into a corner, seeing that referee Hugh Russell Jnr had to leap in to save him at 1-09 of the first round. The contest had been scheduled for eight.

Shane McGuigan-trained prospect **Josh Pritchard** made his professional debut, striking Hungarian **Aron Szilagyi** around the ring with shuddering force. A left hook slammed into the journeyman's side. Szilagyi dropped his hands, a clear sign of distress. Portsmouth's Pritchard ramped up the attack, arching his right over the top and sweeping it into the body as a hook. Szilagyi didn't crack but lost the four rounds 40-36.

Belfast's **Paddy Gallagher** launched himself at **Miguel Aguilar**. Tearing into him with heavy combinations. The Nicaraguan reeled beneath the attack. Aguilar, based in Spain, nearly crumbled at the end of the second round but resorted to holding to make it through. Miguel lost a point for the clinching and lost the four-round contest 40-35. **BN**

THE VERDICT A tremendous night in Belfast could lead Frampton to a fantastic fight with Scott Quigg this year.

FULL RESULTS

Carl Frampton (122lbs), 20-0 (14), w rsf 5 **Chris Avalos** (121lbs 9oz), 25-3 (10); **Dillian Whyte** (247lbs), 14-0 (11), w rsf 5 **Beka Lobjanidze** (228lbs), 10-1 (8); **Viktor Plotnykov** (146 1/4lbs), 32-2 (15), w pts 12 **Denton Vassell** (147lbs), 21-3 (11), **Anthony Cacace** (132 1/2lbs), 11-0 (4), w pts 8 **Santiago Bustos** (130lbs 2oz), 7-5-1 (3); **Conrad Cummings** (161lbs 6oz), 6-0 (2), w pts 6 **Roberto Palenzuela** (162lbs 9oz), 3-1-1 (1); **Josh Pritchard** (127lbs 6oz), 1-0, w pts 4 **Aron Szilagyi** (126lbs 5oz), 2-4-1; **Marco McCullough** (128lbs 7oz), 12-1 (8), w rsf 1 **Malkhaz Tatrishvili** (131lbs 6oz), 9-9.



POUND FOR POUND PROGRAMMING

THURS 5 MARCH 7PM • LIVE: BUNCE'S BOXING HOUR

STEVE BUNCE BRINGS YOU HIS UNIQUE TAKE ON THE WORLD OF BOXING ALONG WITH BARRY JONES AND GUESTS

FRI 6 MARCH 7PM • LIVE: TETE V BUTLER

UNDEFEATED PAUL BUTLER RETURNS TO THE RING IN HIS SECOND WORLD TITLE CHALLENGE WHEN HE TAKES ON ZOLANI TETE FOR THE IBF WORLD SUPER-FLYWEIGHT TITLE

SAT 7 MARCH 12.30PM • LIVE: RUENROENG V SHIMING

DECORATED OLYMPIAN ZOU SHIMING GETS HIS SHOT AT IBF WORLD FLYWEIGHT CHAMP AMNAT RUENROENG AS HE BIDS TO SECURE A FIRST WORLD TITLE IN JUST HIS SEVENTH FIGHT

SUN 8 MARCH 2PM • RING MASTERS

RINGMASTERS REVIEWS THE ENIGMATIC FORMER WBO SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION CHRIS EUBANK IN HIS SECOND EPIC CONTEST AGAINST NORTHERN IRELAND'S RAY CLOSE

MON 9 MARCH 7PM • NEW: BOXING MATTERS

EVERY TIME A BIG FIGHT'S COMING UP ALEX STEEDMAN AND HIS ESTEEMED GUESTS PREVIEW THE ACTION

TUES 10 MARCH 7PM • NEW: BOXNATION PRESENTS

SCOTLAND'S 'AMAZING' ALEX ARTHUR AND A YOUNG ENZO MACCARINELLI ARE ON THE CARD AS JOE CALZAGHE HEADLINES AGAINST BYRON MITCHELL - WHO HAD DECLARED HE WOULD KNOCK THE WELSHMAN OUT

WED 11 MARCH 7PM • UNCUT: SAUNDERS V BLACKWELL

ALL-ACTION COMMONWEALTH MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMP BILLY JOE SAUNDERS ATTEMPTS TO ADD THE BRITISH BELT AGAINST NICK BLACKWELL ON A CARD FEATURING 5 CHAMPIONSHIPS

ALL THIS AND MORE FROM YOUR 24/7 BOXING CHANNEL
FOR FULL SCHEDULE VISIT www.BOXNATION.com

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **RAINHAM STEEL**

HAMMER DRILLED

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



LONG NIGHT: Fury [left] controls the distance against a struggling Hammer, then breaks into song [below]

Fury stays on course for Klitschko, while Eubank Jnr wins a title



Danny Flexen

@DF_BoxingNews

RINGSIDE

⊕ NORTH GREENWICH

FEBRUARY 28

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD



AVING completed a routine eight-round retirement victory over game but limited **Christian Hammer**, flamboyant

heavyweight **Tyson Fury** insisted on singing the assembled throng at the O2 an Elvis Presley song. As the crowd waited with bated breath, wondering which of the "King's" many hits he would belt out, Fury paused and then launched into *Walking in Memphis...* by Marc Cohn. Perhaps the opening line referencing "Blue Suede Shoes"

had confused him, but Fury's delivery was actually pretty good and he appeared as casual and composed in performing that ditty as he had in controlling Hammer. Having exercised his lungs for the second time that night, Fury then called out heavyweight supremo Wladimir Klitschko, for whom Fury is the mandatory contender with the WBO.

This was almost a carbon copy of November's retirement victory over Dereck Chisora, Fury's speed and mobility again proving too much for his rival, except that the Romanian based in Hamburg lasted two rounds fewer than the Londoner had before Christian's pragmatic corner pulled him out. It was the right decision, as Fury appeared to have won every round of their scheduled 12 and, the Wilmslow giant having taken a few flush shots without looking in any

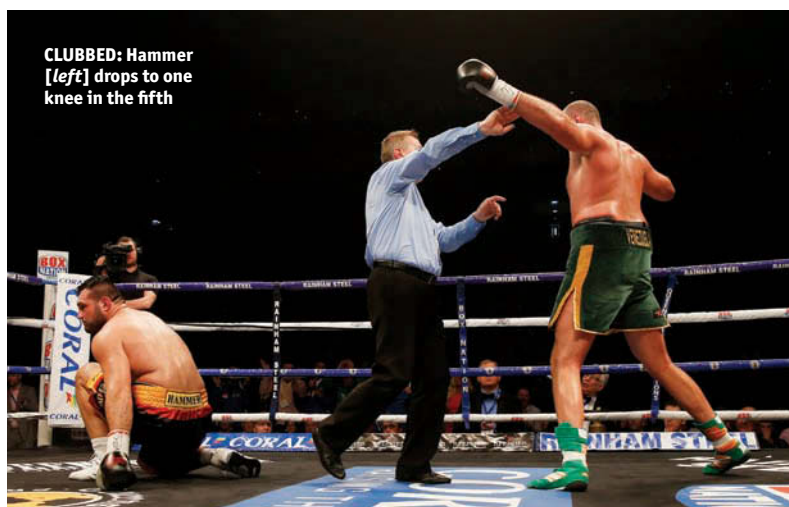
discomfort, it did not seem that Hammer could pull off a dramatic turnaround.

Each round was remarkably similar. Fury switched stance throughout, proving equally adept from either posture, and skirted around the ring in both directions, intermittently stopping to rattle off a fast up-jab or combination. Still improving at 26, Fury was far too quick and agile for Hammer, regularly moving around his foe mid-flurry, nailing him from myriad angles. Never rushed, Fury absorbed the few punches he took, before smothering the strong but woefully outclassed Hammer, or moving away.

Fury scored a knockdown in the fifth with a right over the top that landed above Hammer's ear. Christian

looked daze as he rose and the end was, it appeared, imminent. But Hammer clung on, Fury connected with a few





CLUBBED: Hammer [left] drops to one knee in the fifth

more hard single shots and the bell rang. Hammer became increasingly desperate for respite, resulting in two warnings for holding – the second one final – from referee Marcus McDonnell in round seven. A frustrating eighth saw Fury land hard punches that clearly rocked Hammer – a left hook near the round's end especially – but fail to capitalise. He seemed to be enjoying his second consecutive masterclass, but Hammer's team ended his fun.

The judges were Frank Michael Maass, Mikael Hook and Terry O'Connor. Fury retained his WBO International belt.

"I believe my style, the way I switch and move, and do stupid things in the

ring, is the most unique style in boxing," Fury said afterwards. "The way I turn, and twist, and move, and bend, and slide, I've never seen other heavyweights do it.

"Klitschko's who I want, Klitschko's who I'm mandatory for, and Klitschko's who I'm gonna topple to become a superstar."

While Fury got the job done with consummate ease, this was really **Chris Eubank Jnr's** night. The

Brighton middleweight came back from November's crushing but ultimately vital points defeat to Billy Joe Saunders to win the Interim WBA title. Presumably having learned lessons from the Saunders setback, Eubank Jnr started faster against

'I BELIEVE MY STYLE IS THE MOST UNIQUE IN BOXING'

Moscow's champion **Dmitry Chudinov**, engaging the dogged, tough Russian in a war of attrition early on. However, with his rival sustaining two cuts, one in only the second round, and his own left eye swelling, Eubank showed maturity in boxing on the move more in the second half, pacing it perfectly this time around.

All of this led to a stoppage at 2-11 of the 12th and final session, several rounds after the corner of previously unbeaten Chudinov, thoroughly beaten up by this point, should have withdrawn their brave charge.

Eubank was ahead 108-101 (for judge Guillermo Perez Pineda), 107-102 (Leszek Jankowiak, same as me) and 106-103 (Erkki Meronen), but I had him clearly behind after four rounds. Chris was apprehensive in the opening stages, relying on occasional explosive bursts, while Chudinov pushed him back and, despite a lacerated left eye from an accidental head-clash in the second, threw and landed more as the war was waged mostly at close quarters. That all changed in the fifth when Eubank came on strong, hammering Chudinov with big left hooks and uppercuts.

When the Brighton man let his shots go with speed and power, he looked world-class. If Chris had used his right hand more – given the positioning of Chudinov's cut – he may have got the Russian out of there earlier. His favoured right uppercut was often blocked by Chudinov's tight guard.

Eubank was comfortable enough by the sixth to showboat and once he got on his toes and threw less, taking the odd wander, appeared resigned to ➤



DISTORTED: A bloodied Chudinov [left] absorbs another Eubank blow

RINGSIDE NOTES

● **THE** fight between Eubank Jnr and Chudinov was nearly cancelled at less than an hour's notice.

Promoter Frank Warren claimed he, Chudinov's team and the Eubanks had agreed to use neutral officials but that the BBBoC were refusing to sanction them doing so, insisting on a British referee and judge. Warren later confirmed the issue had been resolved and that he wanted to thank Board General Secretary Robert Smith for his intervention.

Eubank Jnr had been unaware of the entire, extraordinary, episode.

Declan Warrington

● **WALSH** has now been fighting at a high domestic level for around four years. If this fact is frustrating for your writer, it must be infuriating for the fighter himself. Walsh evidently has the talent to test himself in a higher league and, at 28, now would be a good time to get moving. He is the WBO No. 7 and I would fancy him to be at least competitive against the men above him.

● **SOME** of the entrances were amusing. Bradley Skeete emerged to the Jay Z version of *Hard Knock Life*, while Tyson Fury chose *Trouble*, by Elvis Presley – yes, he got that one right. Most striking, however, was Joe Murray, fully committing to Rednex's *Cotton Eye Joe* by parading to the ring wearing half-open (or half-closed, depending on your philosophy) dungarees and a straw hat. Bravo, Joe.

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



DOWNHILL FAST: Murray [left] starts brightly but Walsh takes over

lightweight as recently as last June and in this 10-rounder for the vacant WBO European 147lb belt, Skeete rapidly made his size and superior skill-set tell. A long right hand felled the Georgian early on before two big swings from the same hand decked him again, to be counted out by third man Gray. Unused judges were Maass, Parris and Andre Van Grootenbruel.

Georgian **David Kvaratskhelia** entered his six-rounder against Skeete's stablemate, intelligent Erith super-bantam – albeit over the feather limit here – **Lewis Pettitt** having lost seven times inside-schedule and suffered 14 defeats (against just five wins) overall. So it came as no surprise when he looked inept from the opening bell, with clumsy footwork and a flimsy guard. Well-schooled Pettitt quickly took advantage, dropping the import three times, all with whipping left hooks to the body, for a stoppage from referee Bob Williams at 2-19 of the first.

Light-heavyweight **Dempsey Fury** – so called because he shares his real first name, Hughie, with his larger cousin – won his fourth pro fight in a row. The Manchester man jabbed sharply from thigh-level and used feints to befuddle the unambitious Lithuanian **Ernestas Dapkus** over four rounds. The physically bigger favourite – something of a recurring theme on the undercard – took Mr Williams' verdict, 39-37.

Another man who has made a virtue of having been forced to change his name is Chingford debutant **Boy Jones Jnr** – get it? The pun-loving super-feather was born Ben, like the Crawley pro, and brought impressive support (around 500 fans, according to the promoter) to watch him take every round of four on Mr Williams' card against Swindon's game **Joe Beeden**. Jones is tall, lean and rangy but Beeden often rolled under those long levers and the competitiveness of their bout belied both the score and Joe's record. Jones was ultimately a little too polished but this was entertaining fare. **BN**

THE VERDICT Fury and Eubank Jnr shine, but the undercard features a few mismatches.

FULL RESULTS

Tyson Fury (260lbs), 24-0 (18), w rtd 8 **Christian Hammer** (248lbs), 17-4 (10); **Chris Eubank Jnr** (159 1/2lbs), 19-1 (14), w rsf 12 **Dmitry Chudinov** (159 3/4lbs), 14-1-2 (9); **Liam Walsh** (129 1/2lbs), 18-0 (12), w rsf 5 **Joe Murray** (129 3/4lbs), 15-2 (6); **Bradley Skeete** (146 1/2lbs), 19-1 (8), w ko 1 **Anzor Gamgebeli** (141lbs), 20-8-3 (8); **Frank Buglioni** (167 3/4lbs), 16-1 (12), w rsf 1 **Ivan Jukic** (166lbs), 21-4 (14); **Lewis Pettitt** (128 1/4lbs), 16-1 (6), w rsf 1 **David Kvaratskhelia** (127 3/4lbs), 5-15; **Dempsey Fury** (177 3/4lbs), 4-0, w pts 4 **Ernestas Dapkus** (168lbs), 2-5 (2); **Boy Jones Jnr** (132 1/4lbs), 1-0, w pts 4 **Joe Beeden** (130 3/4lbs), 1-24 (1).

► going the distance. But Chudinov's left eye was also cut by the 11th, his whole face a bloody mess. Eubank hammered the gutsy champion around the ring in the last, landing an incalculable number of unanswered blows before referee Hook belatedly waved the finish. It was the best fight on the show.

"This guy was non-stop coming forward," Eubank noted of Chudinov later. "With [Billy Joe] Saunders I had to chase, I had to force him to fight. Saunders would have been happy to mess around, and pot-shot, and have a boring fight. I didn't have to worry about that with this guy."

In September 2013, Cromer's **Liam Walsh** had successfully defended his Commonwealth super-featherweight title with a majority decision over **Joe Murray** of Manchester. Seventeen months later a fired-up Murray hoped to even the score and take that strap plus Walsh's British belt. Joe was left disappointed however as the stronger and more patient Norfolk man gradually broke him down before winning in five of a scheduled 12. Early on it was rangy Murray's volume against switch-hitting Walsh's more economical but harder hitting. I had Murray ahead after three but he seemed to be putting an awful lot into winning rounds, while Walsh patiently chipped away. Walsh poured it on in the fourth – a left hook-left uppercut combination was particularly hurtful – and Murray finished the round ragged and with a closing left eye. Murray tried to retaliate in the fifth but a right uppercut turned him around so he was facing the ropes and referee Marcus McDonnell stepped in at 1-12; there were no complaints. The redundant

judges were Steve Gray, Dave Parris and O'Connor.

Enfield super-middle **Frank Buglioni** has now won four straight since his sole career loss, but while he will have learned from November's decision over undefeated Andrew Robinson, a predictable 85-second victory over the much smaller Croatian southpaw **Ivan Jukic** here will have been of little

benefit. Jukic had been finished in a round last year by Eubank Jnr, so this never looked like a distance fight. Buglioni jabbed well then, establishing the lack of threat from Jukic, brought out the big guns. A right downstairs dropped the Croat, before a follow-up barrage against the ropes

prompted Gray's intervention at 1-25.

This writer had predicted a one or two-round blowout for Penge's **Bradley Skeete** the day before this card when his Georgian opponent, **Anzor Gamgebeli**, already a big underdog, weighed in five-and-a-half pounds lighter than the lanky, increasingly spiteful welterweight. Gamgebeli had fought at

THE PATIENT NORFOLK MAN GRADUALLY BROKE MURRAY DOWN



BOY DONE GOOD: Jones [left] battles Beeden to entertaining effect

TOWNEND KEEPS KNOCKING ON THE DOOR

Andy triumphs, while Barrett wins Battle of Barnsley



Ashley Ball
RINGSIDE

⊕ DONCASTER
FEBRUARY 28

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT
★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

ANDY TOWNEND took the frustrations of a delayed vacant English super-featherweight title fight out on short-notice opponent **John Green**.

Green was drafted in at a few days' notice after scheduled opponent Femi Fehintola withdrew with a perforated eardrum. He made a decent start but was taken out by the Barnsley man in their 10-round non-title fight.

Middlesbrough's Green stood with Townend for two rounds before the home fighter whipped in a destructive body shot in the third.

Up at eight, Green was down again from the next shot after vicious finisher Townend rushed in and hit him to the midsection again. Green made it up before a right uppercut had him down and waved out by referee Robert Chalmers with 2-20 gone.

Barnsley's Townend has stopped his last four and will fight Fehintola on May 2 for the English belt and as a Commonwealth title eliminator.

The chief support saw a Barnsley derby and **Robbie Barrett** haunt his old amateur trainer Mick Wale with a win over the latter's fighter **Brad Botham** for the vacant Central Area lightweight title.

Wale, father of super-bantamweight Josh, had switched Barrett into a southpaw and he used this as a tool to earn the 99-92 decision and the belt in the eyes of arbiter Andrew Wright.

The scoring was too wide but the rounds were close and difficult to score. Barrett, like his trainer Stefy Bull once had, does his best work going backwards and caught the onrushing Botham with one-tuos that probably edged him the rounds.

Botham still had successes but could not pin his opponent down long enough to do any sustained damage.

Wright oversaw another derby contest with a decision win for **Jason Ball** against fellow hometown **Luke Crowcroft** for the vacant British Masters Bronze middleweight belt.

Photos: ANDY ALLENBY



TAMED: After an even opening, Townend [left] stops Green in the third

FULL RESULTS

Andy Townend (132lbs), 11-3 (8), w rsf 3 **John Green** (131lbs), 3-2-1 (1); **Robbie Barrett** 8-2-1 (134 1/2lbs), w pts 10 **Brad Botham** (133lbs), 2-2-1 (1); **Jason Ball** (163lbs), 9-18-1 (5), w pts 8 **Luke Crowcroft** (163lbs), 8-3 (2); **Jason Cunningham** (118lbs), 14-2 (5), w pts 8 **Csaba Kovacs** (118lbs), 6-5 (4); **Simone Lucas** (162lbs), 6-25-4 (1), w pts 4 **Adam Jones** (158lbs), 4-7-4; **Dec Spelman** (186lbs), 3-0 (2), w rsf 3 **Dan Foster** (180lbs), 0-1; **Steven Hale** (131lbs), 5-0 (2), w rsf 1 **Harvey Hemsley** (134lbs), 3-15-1 (2); **Nathan French** (141lbs), 3-0, w pts 4 **Andy Harris** (135lbs), 3-23-1; **Darren Tetley** (146 1/2lbs), 5-0 (3), w rsf 2 **Luke Brassfield** (150 1/2lbs), 1-2 (1); **Aston Jolly** (155 1/2lbs), 5-0-1, w pts 6 **Bheki Moyo** (148lbs), 0-71-2.

A pattern to the fight never really emerged over eight rounds of what was a frankly timid affair.

Crowcroft looked jaded and Ball took advantage by regularly throwing in greater volume. It was this apparent eagerness to win that garnered him the 77-75 success.

Jason Cunningham was an eight-round winner too. The Doncaster man saw off dangerous Hungarian **Csaba Kovacs** with a 80-72 win, according to Chalmers.

Kovacs tired late on and Cunningham gunned for the stoppage of a contest he had dominated by using slick skills from his southpaw stance.

Cunningham then proposed to girlfriend Becky in the ring and also got the desired decision there.

Unbeaten fighters **Steven Hale**, **Darren Tetley**, **Dec Spelman**,



JADED: Crowcroft [left] is outworked by Ball over eight rounds

Aston Jolly and **Nathan French** all kept their Os, with the first three doing so early in four-threes.

Hale, from nearby Conisbrough, kicked off the bill by destroying Bristol's **Harvey Hemsley** in 92 seconds.

Hemsley was decked with each hand before Wright ended his torrid evening.

The impressive Tetley, from Bradford, blasted away fellow southpaw **Luke Brassfield**, from Long Eaton, with 2-31 gone in the second. Brassfield had been down from a left cross. Chalmers then called a halt.

Chalmers also oversaw Spelman and French's wins.

Scunthorpe's Spelman did not have it all his own way against Dorset debutant **Dan Foster**, now with Glyn Rhodes in Sheffield, but his extra firepower earned him the win with 1-50 gone in the third.

French won a scrappy contest with Gloucester's **Andy Harris** 40-35. Harris had a point deducted for spoiling in the third.

Wright refereed Doncaster's Jolly, who overcame winless Londoner **Bheki Moyo** 60-54 in a six-tuos bout.

Simone Lucas, from Nottingham, got his first win since 2013 against hometown man **Adam Jones**, again over four-threes and supervised by Wright. Lucas won the exchanges with Jones only sharing a round in the 40-37 verdict.

THE VERDICT Townend demonstrates once again that he's the up-and-coming super-featherweight domestically.

A GREAT WEEKEND FOR BELFAST

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



WELL PREPARED:
Burnett shows the
value of a good
training camp

Ryan Burnett and Jordan Cooke
both impress in Sheffield,
writes Andy Whittle

U

NBEATEN Belfast bantam **Ryan Burnett**, who had won both bouts since joining up with Adam Booth, and who had spent part of his preparation for a scheduled six-rounder against Ghanaian

southpaw **Isaac Owusu** in Monte Carlo alongside gym-mate and WBO middleweight champ Andy Lee, needed less than four minutes

to register win number seven on Dave Coldwell's show at Ice, Sheffield (February 27).

Owusu was left holding towards the end of a one-sided opener before sheer weight of punches dropped him momentarily in a neutral corner early in the next. Referee Mark Lyson rightly intervened with just 26 seconds of the session having elapsed as the dominant Burnett, an early winner in all but one of his seven outings to date, recommenced his onslaught.

There was an early victory too for Coventry novice **Jordan Cooke**, who, having maybe conceded a close opener to game Huddersfield lightweight **Ismail Anwar**,

duly dropped the visitor with a flashing short hook 64 seconds into the second, referee John Latham waving a halt without taking up a count.

A third inside-the-distance finish came in the last of a scheduled four between Sheffield's **Sam O'maison** and Lithuania's **Aleksas Vaseris**, who having been counted on after touching down momentarily in the opener, was floored twice in the last, before referee Lyson rescued him with 70 seconds of the round gone.

Sam's gym-mate **Callum Hancock**,

who donated his purse to another Ingle-stabled boxer Lee Noble, who is currently battling leukaemia, made it seven out of seven with a one-sided 40-36 victory over Essex puncher **Danny Brown**.

Things were just a little closer in the four-threes cruiser affair between one-fight novices **Jos Paul**, of Eckington, and Nottingham's **Jason Jones**. Paul, who had been made to trim a bushy beard prior to the bout, ran out a 40-37 winner in a contest which saw both boxers tire.

Honours were shared in the six-round welterweight show-closer between Belper's **Ryan Fields**, who after some good early work looked a more likely winner, and Connah's Quay puncher **Joe Lovell**, referee Latham giving the latter the last and with it a 57-57 draw.

In something of a surprise, local man **Qasim Hussain**, who had lost his last 22,

DOMESTIC
★ ROUND-UP ★

UNBEATEN:
Faizy's latest
victory comes
over Carr

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/
JOHN CLIFTON





SIX OF THE BEST:
Griffiths [right]
outscores
Sokolowski

deservedly edged a 39-38 points win over Harworth's **Josh Morgan**, who, having his first bout for almost a year, hadn't been beaten in five previous outings.

Ilkeston cruiser **Russ Henshaw** had a decent weight advantage over late Lincoln sub **Mitch Mitchell**, and he ran out a 39-36 winner, having had a point deducted by referee Latham in the last for seemingly letting one too many punches stray a little too far around Mitch's back.

Busy Steve Wood promoted at Preston Guild Hall (February 28) where a troublesome ring necessitated propping up from beneath on occasion, and all of the home boxers ran out victorious via the long route.

Penrith's **Rick Skelton** topped the bill in a 10-round vacant British Masters light-middleweight title contest against Welshman **Bradley Pryce**, which ended wider than might have been expected. Southpaw Skelton emerged a 98-92 winner for referee Mark Lyson who docked the at-times clowning Pryce a point along the way for throwing his opponent. Rick's win sees him improve to 13-0 (1).

Also losing points, two of them, for illegal use of the head, was Trowbridge's **Dan Carr**, who fell to a 60-52 six-round loss at the hands of unbeaten light-welter **AJ Faizy**.

In an eight-round vacant Bronze British Masters welterweight title bout, Blackburn's **Kurt Grieve** had a point docked for holding en route to a 77-75 win over Bolton's **Chris Jenkinson**.

First-timer **Shakeeb Ali**, a lightweight from Blackburn, conceded weight to Nuneaton's **Kristian Laight** but still ran out a 40-36 winner for referee John Latham.

WATSON RETURNED AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS

Bolton's unbeaten **Rick Godding** eased back, after an operation on his shoulder led to a 22-month absence, to shut out Llanelli-based Pole **Robert Studzinski** by the same four-point margin.

Scotland had two shows over the weekend, Paul Graham promoting at Fauldhouse Miners Welfare (February 27) and then 24 hours later, Iain Wilson going at Paisley's Lagoon Leisure Centre.

Topping the bill over eight at Fauldhouse was local favourite **Sean Watson**, who returned after almost two years on the sidelines to impress in dropping

Chichester's **Jonathan Fry** twice, once each in the sixth and seventh rounds, on his way to an 80-70 eight-round win.

Livingston first-timer **Martin Taylor** made a winning start, taking all six rounds against Torquay's **Ali Wyatt**, while novice light-welterweight southpaw **Lee Redpath**, of Edinburgh, made it two out of two with another six-round shutout against Hull's **Paul O'Brien**.

In Paisley, Inverness heavy **Gary Cornish**, with one eye on a potential British heavyweight title eliminator against Brixton's Dillian Whyte, stayed busy by registering a first-round victory over Croatia's **Marino Goles**, a heavy right sending the visitor over and prompting the stoppage after just 59 seconds.

The Highlander is now 20-0 (11).

There was a victory too for Kirkcaldy-based Latvian **Andrejs Podusovs**, who came out on top over 10 in a vacant British Masters lightweight title fight against Cambuslang's previously unbeaten **Jordan McCorry**, who was down in the first, referee Kenny Pringle scored it 96-94.

Aberdeen welter **Matthew McAllister** moved to 9-0 (2) with a six-round points success over Hull's **Danny Little**, but Irvine's **Ryan Collins** wasn't so fortunate, dropping a 39-38 decision to Plymouth's **Chris Adaway**.

As expected, **Gary Murray**, of Coatbridge, improved to 4-0 by taking all six rounds against Tamworth's **Matt Seawright**.

On Robert Waterman's three-fight charity show at Bayswater's Royal Lancaster Hotel (February 25), Welsh cruiser **Danni Griffiths** registered his sixth straight victory with a shut-out 60-54 win over heavier Plymouth-based Pole **Kamil Sokolowski**.

Reading's Zimbabwe-born **Tamuka Mucha** made it 10 out of 10 when he stopped Latvia's comebacking **Gatis Skuja** in the sixth and final round. **Jimmy Cooper**, a lightweight first-timer from Totton in Hampshire, had to settle for a share of the spoils against Stockport's **Jamie Quinn**.



PERFECT 10:
Mucha [right]
halts Skuja

CUT SHORT

Accidental clash of heads leaves Jones slashed but victorious



Andy Whittle

RINGSIDE

⊕ CANNOCK

FEBRUARY 28

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT

★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

THE eliminator for the English middleweight title between Stafford's **Grant Cunningham** and Leeds southpaw **Damon Jones** at Chase Leisure Centre came to a somewhat unsatisfactory conclusion 93 seconds into the fifth round. Jones, having been left with a cut above the right eye from an accidental clash of heads, was duly ruled unfit to continue and the bout went to the scorecard of referee Shaun Messer, who adjudged Damon a 48-47 technical decision winner.

The taller Jones had certainly made the better start, taking the first two rounds, during which he left Cunningham with a bump below the right eye, but the third was closer and with his confidence growing and the noisy crowd urging him on, it appeared the balance might just be swinging back in the latter's favour.

Both boxers had enjoyed success in what little of the fifth occurred before the clash of heads cut proceedings short. Hopefully a rematch is on the cards.

Stafford's **Rob Hunt**, busier throughout, deservedly collected the vacant British Masters Bronze welter title with a one-sided 80-72 eight-round victory over Melksham's **Liam Richards**, who was having his first bout since March 2012. Referee Gareth Morris hardly needed to check his arithmetic at the end with former English super-bantamweight title challenger Richards having landed very little of note.

With **Luke Paddock's** Midlands Area light-welter title clash having been scuppered just a few days earlier, the Bloxwich man had to content himself with a keep-busy six-threes against Newark's game **Fonz Alexander**. He gave Paddock, who came on strongly in the closing two rounds, a decent



GUTSY: Alexander [left] comes to fight against Paddock

Photos: ROBERT ELLIS/KO BOXING



RANGE-FINDER: Cunningham [left] scores with a stiff left against Jones

workout before going down to a 59-55 loss on referee Morris' card.

Three four-rounders ended in 40-36 scorelines, two of them over four-threes and one, a one-sided affair over four-twos, refereed by Messer, saw Stourbridge's **Steven Pearce** (having his first bout since being halted in three last July by Bradley Skeete),

beat Hereford's **Dean Evans**, who had stepped in at the 11th hour and who conceded a good bit of weight.

Pearce will have shed a little rust, while novice Evans will have benefited from the ring time.

Victors in the two four-three bouts were Birmingham's **Sean Davis** and **Steven Mennell**, of Leeds. Davis, in another bout

overseen by Messer, dominated from the outset against Latvian visitor **Janis Pukins** who, having picked up some damage below the right eye before the first round was out, didn't manage to connect with anything decent until he landed a left midway through the last.

Yorkshireman Mennell, aggressor for the most part and always a punch ahead,

FULL RESULTS

Damon Jones (159lbs), 13-0 (3), w td 5 **Grant Cunningham** (160lbs), 10-1 (2); **Rob Hunt** (149lbs), 20-3-2 (2), w pts 8 **Liam Richards** (146 1/4lbs), 11-4; **Luke Paddock** (145lbs 2oz), 10-0 (1), w pts 6 **Fonz Alexander** (143 1/2lbs), 2-9; **Steven Mennell** (155lbs 2oz), 11-9 (5), w pts 4 **Kevin McCauley** (153 1/4lbs), 11-88-5; **Josh McLaren** (152lbs 6oz), 7-1 (2), w rsf 5 **Jason Nesbitt** (145lbs), 10-186-4 1NC (8); **Waqas Mohammed** (136lbs 6oz), 1-0, w pts 4 **Ibrar Riyaz** (136lbs), 4-72-3 (2); **Sean Davis**, (127lbs 6oz), 5-0, w pts 4 **Janis Pukins** (128lbs 2oz), 4-23-2 (3); **Steven Pearce** (155 1/2lbs), 9-4 (3), w pts 4 **Dean Evans** (144 1/4lbs), 0-3.

had a tougher time overcoming Brighton veteran **Kevin McCauley**, who kept things competitive and was effective on the counter but had a point deducted in the last by referee Morris for throwing Steven to the canvas.

A slight surprise in the evening's curtain-raiser saw Birmingham's usually durable double centurion **Jason Nesbitt** dropped and halted by Stoke's **Josh McLaren** 56 seconds into the fifth of a scheduled six-twos.

Seemingly headed for a points victory, Josh moved up a gear at the start of the fifth and having trapped Jason in a neutral corner, landed a pair of rights to the head, a sustained flurry to the body and a right uppercut to send Nesbitt over.

Jason beat the count but appeared distressed as he walked towards his own corner and referee Morris waved it off.

Birmingham first-timer **Waqas Mohammed**, circling and flicking out a regular jab, claimed a debut 40-37 four-threes victory over Reading's **Ibrar Riyaz**, who found himself backed to the ropes on a couple of occasions towards the end.

Shaun Messer refereed.

THE VERDICT With the main event warming up nicely a rematch would be most welcome.

MARCH**THURSDAY 5****Vodafone Events Centre, Manukau City, New Zealand**

Joseph Parker v Jason Pettaway.

FRIDAY 6**Echo Arena, Liverpool (BoxNation)**

Zolani Tete v Paul Butler (IBF super-flyweight title); James Dickens v Josh Wale (vacant British super-bantamweight title); Derry Mathews v s/o; Kevin Satchell (holder) v s/o (British and Commonwealth flyweight titles); Liam Smith v Robert Talarek (vacant WBO International light-middleweight title); Jack Catterall v Cesar David Inalef (vacant WBO Inter-Continental light-welterweight title); Thomas Stalker v Michael Mooney; Steven Lewis v Kevin Hanks.

(Promoter: Queensberry Promotions. Tel: 0844 2491000. Doors open: 6pm).

Thistle Hotel, Glasgow

Charlie Flynn v s/o; Joe Ham v Aivaras Balsys; Ryan Smith v s/o; Michael Roberts v Dawid Knade; Jon Slowey v Michael Ramabelets; Jamie McGuire v Jamie Quinn; Stuart Burt v William Warburton. (Promoter: Alex Morrison).

MGM Grand, Las Vegas, Nevada (BT Sport 2 & ESPN2)

Tony Harrison v Antwone Smith; Ievgen Khytrov v Jorge Melendez; Rau'shee Warren v Javier Gallo; Erickson Lubin v s/o; Phil Lo Greco v Rafael Cobos; Jamal Herring v Arturo Urzquiza; Caleb Hunter Plant v Daniel Henry; Jamontay Clark v s/o. (Promoter: Goossen Tutor Promotions & Warriors Boxing).

Belasco Theater, Los Angeles, California (FOX Sports 1)

Joseph Diaz v Juan Luis Hernandez; Jason Quigley v Lanny Dardar. (Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions).

Kissimmee Civic Center, Kissimmee, Florida (Telemundo)

Jonathan Oquendo v Gabino Cota. (Promoter: All Star Boxing).

Civic Auditorium, Glendale, California

Yunier Dorticos v Murat Gassiev; Ismayl Sillah v s/o. (Promoter: Bash Boxing).

Cabarrus Arena, Concord, North Carolina

Roy Jones Jnr v Willie Williams.

Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Centre, Dallas, Texas

Maurice Hooker v Santos Benavides. (Promoter: Undercard).

Bruno Gehrke Halle, Berlin, Germany (British Eurosport)

Damir Beljo v Maik Kurzweil. (Promoter: EC Boxpromotion).

SATURDAY 7**Ice Arena, Hull (Sky Sports)**

Tommy Coyle v Martin Gethin; Shayne Singleton (holder) v Sam Eggington (WBC International Silver welterweight title); Luke Campbell v s/o; Gamal Yafai v Krzysztof Rogowski; Bradley Saunders v Stephane Benito; Rocky Fielding v Olegs Fedotovs; Tom Knight v Erick Ochieng; Connor Seymour v Danny Brown; Charlie Payton v Bobby Jenkinson; Ryan Fuller v James Barnes. (Promoter: Matchroom Boxing. Tel 01277 359900).

York Hall, Bethnal Green

Ben Day v Ilja Sovdra; Kris Agyei-Dua v s/o; Anthony Upton v Lubos Priehradnik; Sonny Upton v Ivan Duvancic; Paul Upton v Zoran Cvek; Rakeem Noble v s/o; Ollie Pinnock v Bheki Moyo; Robert Asgaba v Harjinder Gill; Matthew Chanda v Dmitrijs Gutmans; Jimmy Perrin v James Conroy; Sohail Ahmed v s/o; Jordan Joseph v Iain Jackson. (Promoter: Goodwin Promotions. Tel: 01525 851150. First bell: 5pm).

Meres Leisure Centre, Grantham

Callum Johnson v Bartolomiej Grafka; Jamie Williams v Mikheil Soloninkini; Daryl Baptist v Duane Green; Adam Kettleborough v Ibrar Riyaz; Leigh Wood v Artur Movsesyan; Fonz Alexander v Matt Seawright; Terry Maughan v Liam Griffiths; Moses Smith v Lewis Van Poetsch;

Amir Unsworth v Arvydas Trizno; Ryan Bennett v Chris Adaway; Chris Glading v Mike Jones. (Promoter: Carl Greaves. Tel: 01476 584930. First bell: 7pm).

Camden Centre, King's Cross

Brad Watson v Reynaldo Cajina; Tony Milch v Samet Hyuseinov; Dan Woodgate v Tamas Toth; Matt Butler v Yosif Panov; Junior Saeed v Michael Stupart; Graham Tirrell v Shaunn Watt; Chris Baugh v Valentin Stoychev; Asinia Byfield v Ali Wyatt. (Promoter: Hellraiser Promotions. Tel: 0207 352 1593. First bell: 6pm).

MGM Grand, Las Vegas, Nevada (NBC)

Keith Thurman (holder) v Robert Guerrero (WBA world welterweight title); Adrien Broner v John Molina; Abner Mares v Arturo Santos Reyes; Jorge Lara v Mario Macias; Robert Easter v s/o; Dominic Breazeale v Victor Bisbal; Terrell Gausha v Norberto Gonzalez. (Promoter: Goossen Tutor Promotions).

Cotai Arena, Venetian Resort, Macau, China (BoxNation & HBO2 & UniMas)

Amnat Ruenroeng (holder) v Zou Shiming (IBF flyweight title); Ik Yang v Patomsuk Pathomphong; Glen Tapia v Daniel Dawson; Rex Tso v Michael Enriquez (vacant WBA International super-flyweight title); Jose Felix Jnr v Raymond Sermona; Aston Palicte v Ismael Garcia; Kuok Kun Ng v Chingchai Kiatpracha; Zhou Yun Fei v Paul Valenzuela. (Promoter: Top Rank).

SUNDAY 8**Rainton Meadows Arena, Houghton-le-Spring**

Thomas Essomba v Isaac Quay; Daniel Cope v Tom Whitfield; Jordan King v s/o; Danny Hughes v s/o; Jordan Ellison v s/o; Sam Best v s/o; Lynden Watt v s/o; Liam Cammock v s/o; Mohamed Waqas v s/o; Isaac McLeod v s/o; Simon Vallily v s/o; Thomas Patrick Ward v s/o; Martin Ward v s/o; Lee Mould v s/o. (Promoter: Phil Jeffries. Tel: 07747 611020).

THURSDAY 12**Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, Texas (HBO Latino)**

Francisco Vargas v Will Tomlinson; Vyacheslav Shabransky v Fabiano Pena; Yamaguchi Falcao v Gerardo Ibarra. (Promoter: Golden Boy Promotions & Leija Battah).

FRIDAY 13**Newport Leisure Centre, Newport**

Frankie Borg v Chris Ware (Welsh middleweight title); Craig Kennedy v Wadi Camacho; Jerome Samuels v Barrie Jones (Welsh light-middleweight title); Richard Canning v s/o; Kyle Jones v s/o; James Lilley v s/o; Robbie Turley v s/o; Adam Goldsmith v s/o; Nathan Thorley v s/o; Tony Dixon v s/o; Morgan Jones v Jimmy White. (Promoter: Sanigar Events).

Citizens Bank Arena, Ontario, California (Spike TV)

Andre Berto v Josesito Lopez; Shawn Porter v Roberto Garcia; Chris Arreola v s/o; Oscar Molina v s/o. (Promoter: Goossen Tutor Promotions).

The Space at Westbury, Westbury, New York (Showtime)

Antoine Douglas v Thomas Lamanna; Ismael Barroso v Issouf Kinda. (Promoter: Greg Cohen Promotions & GH3 Promotions).

SATURDAY 14**Kingsway Leisure Centre, Widnes**

Ovill McKenzie (holder) v Matty Askin (British & Commonwealth cruiserweight titles); Enzo Maccarinelli v s/o; Adrian Gonzalez v s/o; Ryan Farrag v s/o; Kevin Hodgkinson v Anwar Alfadli; Michael Gomez Jnr v Jack Heath; Mason Cartwright v Jason McArdle; Macaulay McGowan v George Watson; Matty Fagan v Jamie Quinn; Steve Collins Jnr v s/o. (Promoter: Queensberry Promotions).

York Hall, Bethnal Green

Leon McKenzie v Ivan Stupalo; Larry Ekundayo v Dale Evans; Lee Markham v Jahmaine Smyle (vacant English super-middleweight title); Johnny Garton v Nathan Weise (Southern Area welterweight title); Matt McCarthy v Stanislav Nenkov; Joe Mullender v Eduards Gerasimovs; Adam Hart v s/o; Jose Lopes v Marko Rupcic; Ashley Hill v Michael Waldron; Prince Patel v Patrik Kovacs; Louie Darling v Moses Matovu; Ashley Sexton v s/o; Josh Kennedy v Valentin Marinov; Aji Sharif v Imantas Davidaitis. (Promoter: Goodwin Promotions. Tel: 01525 851150).

Civic Hall, Grays

Johnny Coyle v Liam Richards; Vinzenz Kuech v Daza Usher; Frank Greaves v Dan Carr; Liam Desmond v Rob Brown; Joe Jackson Brown v Charlie Brown. (Promoter: Carl Greaves).

Medway Park Leisure Centre, Gillingham

Grant Dennis v s/o; Martin Hillman v s/o; Ricky Rose v s/o; Oliver Edwards v s/o; Haider Sadiq v s/o; Mick Mills v s/o; DL Jones v s/o; Sonny Whiting v s/o; Danny Shannon v s/o; Nicky Jenman v s/o; Ricky Leach v s/o. (Promoter: Stefy Bull).

Olympia, Liverpool

Stevie Williams v Joe Lovell; Peter Spencer v s/o; Kerry Evans v s/o; Andy Jones v s/o; Jordan Cooke v s/o. (Promoter: Coldwell Boxing).

Victoria Warehouse, Trafford Road, Manchester

"Jimmy" Kilrain Kelly v Nodar Robakidze; Sam Hyde v s/o; Jack Massey v s/o. (Promoter: VIP Promotions).

BOXING ON THE BOX**THURSDAY 5**

6.00pm Sky Sports 1
Ringside
8.00pm BoxNation
Cassius and Helder

FRIDAY 6

7.00pm BoxNation
LIVE Zolani Tete v
Paul Butler
8.30pm British
Eurosport
LIVE Damir Beljo v
Maik Kurzweil

SATURDAY 7

4.00am BT Sport 2
LIVE Tony Harrison v
Antwone Smith
12.30pm BoxNation
LIVE Amnat
Ruenroeng v
Zou Shiming
7.30pm Sky Sports 1
LIVE Tommy Coyle v
Martin Gethin
9.00pm BT Sport 2
WSB: China Dragons v
British Lionhearts

MONDAY 9

7.00pm BoxNation
Boxing Matters

TUESDAY 10

9.30pm BT Sport 2
Boxing Tonight

WEDNESDAY 11

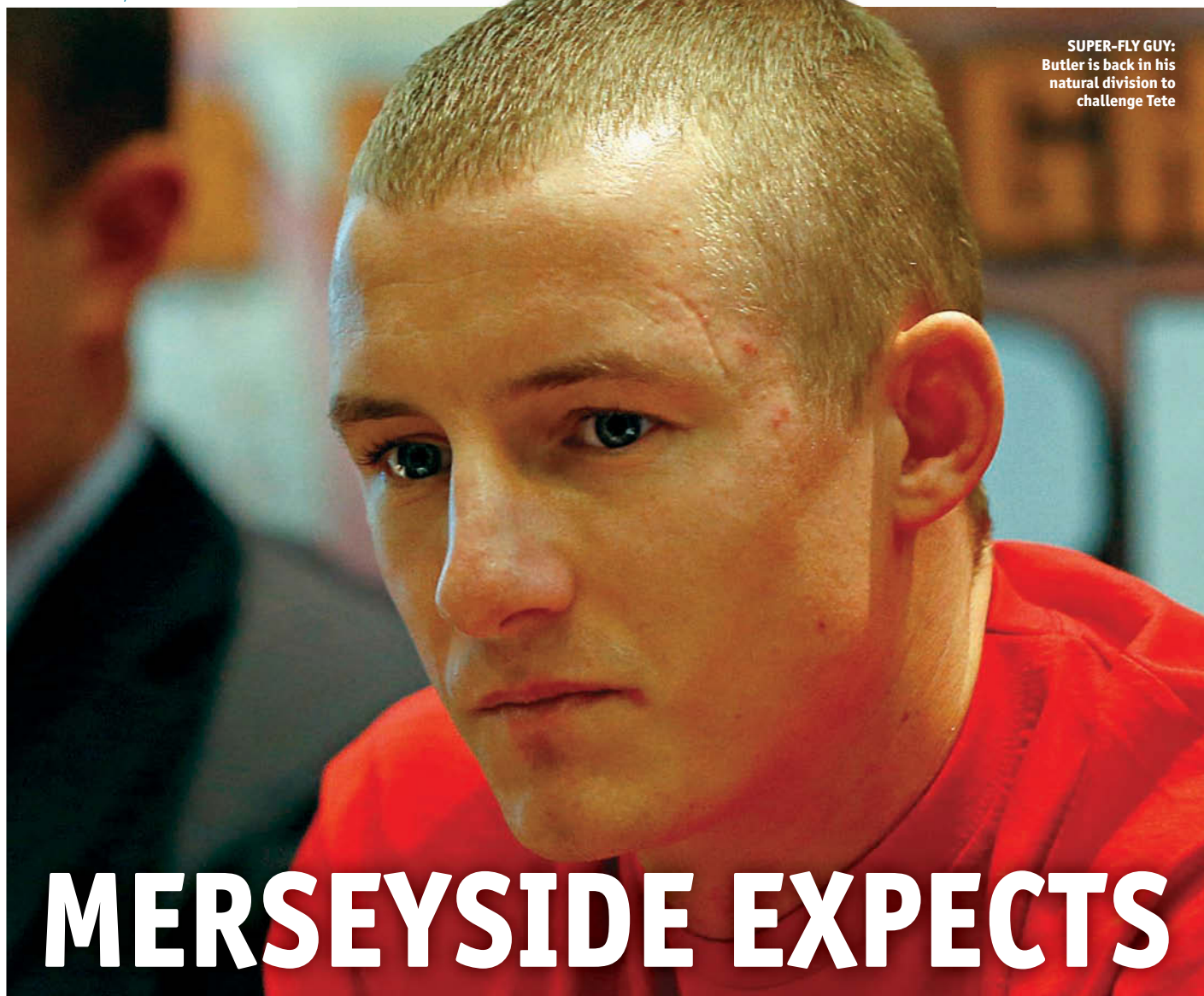
1.50am Channel 4
KOTV Boxing Weekly

PREVIEWS

Previewing the best
upcoming fights
around the world

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★ GOOD ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW BOYERS



SUPER-FLY GUY:
Butler is back in his
natural division to
challenge Tete

MERSEYSIDE EXPECTS

Now the only
world title
challenger
on the bill,
Butler can
make
history,
writes
**Danny
Flexen**

★★★★★ MAIN EVENT

★★★★★ UNDERCARD

W

ITH a surprise world title shot for **Derry Mathews** postponed for a month after WBA world lightweight king Richar Abril fell ill, the task of enhancing Merseyside boxing pride – and selling the majority of tickets at Liverpool's Echo Arena – once again falls to **Paul Butler** of Ellesmere Port, who has fought at the venue five times previously.

It's ironic – and hugely impressive – given the former ABA champion's history, that his only world title victory thus far

came outside of both his 'home' turf and his natural weight class. A tough battle with Darlington's rugged bantam Stuart

Hall was staged in Newcastle and resulted in Butler, really only a super-flyweight, taking the belt with a fair split decision. Despite the convincing nature of his victory, it was telling how easily Butler was pushed back by the stronger Hall in the 12-rounders' latter stages and both the fighter and his team took note, relinquishing the belt and returning to the 115lb division.

Credit promoter Frank Warren for securing a world title opportunity for Butler in his very next fight, but IBF ruler

**OF CONCERN
FOR BUTLER IS
THAT HE HAS
NEVER FOUGHT
A SOUTHPAW
AS A PRO**

Zolani Tete, of South Africa, broke his left hand in training, withdrew and Paul instead virtually shut out substitute opponent Ismael Garnica over 10 sessions in October. Southpaw Tete has since recovered and will put the striking red strap on the line this Friday (March 6). With Mathews' championship contest put back – Derry remains on the bill, ideally against

the most unthreatening opposition possible – all eyes will be on Butler, trainer Anthony “Arnie” Farnell’s first world champion. If he wins he’ll be the first Brit in 104 years to garner a second world title in a lighter division.

Tete’s preparations have been fraught with complication. First head coach Mhikiza Myekeni was fired in August, just a month after the South African captured the vacant title against undefeated Teiru Kinoshita on away ground in Japan. Myekeni had allegedly been AWOL from camp since their return – amid rumours of drug use – and paid a heavy price. Then, less than a month before the fight, it was revealed by the media that Tete was sharing shoddy lodgings with three of his sparring partners, prompting local MEC (provincial government member) Pemmy Majodina to step in and relocate the boxers. Tete’s manager has since insisted the original accommodation was only temporary, but ahead of a stern test against an unbeaten challenger, Zolani’s build-up has been far from ideal.

The 26-year-old champion (same age as Butler) has three defeats on his ledger but two were close verdicts and all came at world level. His only stoppage loss, a fifth-round setback to compatriot Moruti Mthalane, came four-and-a-half years ago. Tete has undoubtedly improved, with his finest pair of triumphs coming in his last two fights. Then-19-2-1 Juan Carlos Sanchez Jr was finished in 10 in his native Mexico after the duo had shared three knockdowns in November 2013, before Kinoshita was widely outscored.

Tete, now trained by former world champ Lehlo Ledwaba, typically allies a decent defence with fast upper-body movement, enabling him to avoid shots and swiftly turn defence into attack. Rangy and mobile, Tete throws a long sharp right jab or double and employs plenty of lateral movement. This is no South American slugger of the like Butler has often faced; Tete is a thoughtful boxer with impressive composure and skills who has upset the applecart on foreign turf. When he does come forward it is to draw the lead of his foe and counter with admirable timing. Zolani’s record makes him look like a banger but many of his early KOs can be attributed more to the quality (or lack thereof) of those victims.

Butler is big and strong for the weight, smart and quick, though two inches

Photo: JIJ PRESS/GETTY IMAGES



shorter and will concede significant reach. He can box on the front or backfoot and few boxers domestically switch their attacks as fluidly from head to body and vice versa. Butler’s characteristic eye-catching combinations could be key and he has the requisite fast, nimble footwork to move out of danger after landing them.

He appears to have the edge in power and flair and is a little more versatile than the title-holder. Tete has, perhaps crucially, fought consistently at a higher level and over the championship distance. Of serious concern for Butler is that he has never fought a southpaw as a pro, even in October

when it was known that Tete would be next.

“I’ve boxed loads as an amateur but I hadn’t had to train for one in over four years,” noted Butler, who has been

TALKING POINT

TETE was set to defend against mandatory challenger McJoe Arroyo but he was granted an extension after his injury. The winner here must meet Arroyo next.

TALE OF THE TAPE

| ZOLANI TETE | PAUL BUTLER |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| n/a | @1PaulButler |
| Mar 8, 1988/26 | DOB/AGE Nov 11, 1988/26 |
| East London | HOMETOWN Ellesmere Port |
| South African | NATIONALITY English |
| 5ft 9ins | HEIGHT 5ft 7ins |
| 19-3 (16) | RECORD 17-0 (8) |
| Southpaw | STANCE Orthodox |
| May 27, 2006/18 | DEBUT/AGE Dec 11, 2010/22 |
| 2 | STOPPAGES AFTER ROUND SIX 0 |
| 2 | VICTORIES OUTSIDE HOME NATION 0 |
| 5/3 | 12-ROUNDERS COMPLETED/WON 3/3 |



EXPERT VIEW

NICK DURANT
SOUTH AFRICAN
TRAINER

NORMALLY, you would ask, ‘How does Tete travel?’ Previously to Japan, the answer was ‘Not so well’, but he won the vacant title in Japan, against an unbeaten guy. Butler is like a British Mexican and that sort of style could give Tete problems, as he likes being in control. But he’s a classy, clever southpaw, very accurate and one who can punch. Butler has the edge – he’s been better prepared and has home advantage, but I’d say Tete is the puncher in the fight.

sparring tall left-handers in world title challenger Martin Ward and good amateur Blane Hyland. “For the first Zolani fight it [getting used to opposing a southpaw] was awkward and frustrating, but now it’s finally clicked.

“Tete is well-schooled, he likes to box, move and break people down. But I’m a level above everyone he’s boxed.”

The opening rounds could be of the feeling-out variety, with two intelligent operators probing for gaps and hoping to elicit mistakes. Butler is likely to produce a higher punch output than his rival, however, and once he adjusts to Tete’s stance and finds his rhythm, can begin to dictate. In his physical prime and with a great training camp behind him, Butler can gradually force Tete back and take a stoppage in the 10th.

Chief support sees an enticing clash in an excellent division, as once-beaten portsider **Jazza Dickens**, 18-1 (6), vies with seasoned and tenacious **Josh Wale**, 17-6-2 (10), for the vacant British super-bantamweight title.

Light-middle **Liam Smith** should have too much talent for durable 10-8-2 (5) Pole **Robert Talarek** and can grab the vacant WBO International crown.

Sleeper hit on an undercard that also includes **Kevin Satchell** and **Jack Caterall**, has former amateur standout **Thomas Stalker**, who has floundered a little as a pro, up against capable and ambitious journeyman **Michael Mooney** over six rounds.

THE VERDICT Butler would likely have preferred not to face a southpaw but he has all the tools.

REPRODUCING THE GOODS

Photo: CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK



MAGNIFICENT SEVEN?
Shiming is aiming to become a world champion in his seventh pro bout

Paul Wheeler contemplates whether Shiming can replicate his amateur achievements in the pros

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT
★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

CHINA'S most successful amateur boxer of all time, **Zou Shiming**, 6-0 (1), attempts to become his country's only current professional world titlist when he challenges Thailand's IBF flyweight belt-holder **Amnat Ruenroeng**, 14-0 (5), at the Cotai Arena within the Venetian Resort in Macau this Saturday (March 7). Top Rank promote, while BoxNation televise in the UK and HBO2/UniMas broadcast in the US.

The two headliners are well known to one another, as they have clashed on a trio of occasions in the past as amateurs. After Ruenroeng triumphed in their initial encounter, Shiming prevailed in the next two meetings, one of which was a tight semi-final at the 2010 Asian Games.

A 2007 World bronze medal-winner and 2008 Olympic quarter-finalist, Ruenroeng has used boxing as a vehicle to turn his life around. Heavy drug use and three separate prison terms left the Chonburi resident on the precipice of self-destruction, but the squared circle proved to be his salvation. He became national champion as an inmate representing the Thai Corrections Department team and never looked back.

TALE OF THE TAPE

| AMNAT RUENROENG | | ZOU SHIMING | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Dec 18, 1979/35 | DOB/AGE | Mar 18, 1981/33 | |
| Chonburi | HOMETOWN | Zunyi | |
| Thai | NATIONALITY | Chinese | |
| 5ft 4 1/2ins | HEIGHT | 5ft 4 1/2ins | |
| 69 1/2ins | REACH | 64 1/2ins | |
| 14-0 (5) | RECORD | 6-0 (1) | |
| Orthodox | STANCE | Orthodox | |
| May 18, 2012/32 | DEBUT/AGE | Apr 6, 2013/32 | |
| 36 | KO % | 17 | |
| 5/5 | 12-ROUNDERS COMPLETED/WON | 1/1 | |
| 3 | WORLD TITLE FIGHTS | 0 | |

Although Ruenroeng enjoyed a fruitful career in the unpaid code, his achievements pale in comparison to Shiming – China's inaugural Olympic boxing champ. An incredible medal haul consisting of two golds and a bronze while competing as an Olympian, three golds and a silver at World championships, plus a pair of Asian Games golds have seen the Zunyi native rightfully hailed as an icon by his countrymen. His immense popularity led to a reported 300 million viewers tuning in to watch his April 2013 professional debut – a four-round unanimous points victory over Eleazar Valenzuela – on Chinese television.

Promoted by Top Rank and training under the tutelage of Hall of Fame coach Freddie Roach, Shiming has progressed steadily during his half-dozen pro outings. He is no knockout artist, but



EXPERT VIEW

CHARLIE EDWARDS
UNBEATEN
FLYWEIGHT

COMPARED to Shiming, Ruenroeng hasn't got that name value. I pick Shiming to win because he was a double Olympic champion – his pedigree speaks for itself. He's based himself in Los Angeles with Freddie Roach, so he's got the best possible team. The whole of China are behind him and they're really pushing for him to win this world title and take over the flyweight division.

it was noticeable in his last fight in November that he put more weight behind his punches than in the past – scoring a trio of knockdowns against an experienced and rugged opponent in Kwanpichit OnesongchaiGym attests to this. The fact that Zou also completed a full 12 rounds for the first time will have done him no harm.

While Shiming's finest wins as a pro have come against relatively unheralded opposition in OnesongchaiGym and three-time Interim WBO title challenger Luis De la Rosa (ud 10 – July 2014), Ruenroeng has overcome quality operators in his three most recent match-ups. He picked up the IBF strap with a unanimous decision against Rocky Fuentes in January last year, before outpointing Kazuto Ioka via split verdict on away turf in Japan less than four months later, with the judge who favoured Ioka being roundly condemned for his questionable scoring.

Amnat secured another split decision success in September against McWilliams Arroyo in a close contest in which he suffered a trip to the canvas and was criticised by some observers for his spoiling tactics.

Ruenroeng's style may not be as aesthetically pleasing as Shiming's, but he is technically adept, as evidenced by his strong amateur credentials and his solid grounding in the art of Muay Thai. Rangy and resolute, the 35-year-old likes to double up the jab to head and body. Having completed over 100 sessions in the pros – more than double Shiming's total – his extra knowledge of the paid ranks could prove vital.

To compensate for his lack of pro experience, Shiming will have to do what he does best – dart around the ring with agility and finesse, unleashing a large volume of flashy, point-scoring combinations. Slick, smart and quick-fisted, the 33-year-old will try to catch the judges' eyes with his greater variety.

Ruenroeng will fire out fast flurries of his own and constantly hound his adversary, but with the challenger's legion of fans baying him on, Shiming can pitter-patter his way to a victory on the scorecards, although the outcome is likely to provoke debate.

Also on the bill, Passaic, New Jersey's **Glen Tapia**, 22-1 (14), contests a light-middleweight 10-rounder against Perth's former WBO championship contestant **Daniel Dawson**, 40-4-1 (26).

THE VERDICT An intriguing all-Asian world title battle between familiar foes should prove riveting to the Macau crowd.

Photos: ACTION IMAGES/CARL RECINE & LEE SMITH

DECORATED:
Gethin is a former English
and British champion



GETHIN THE PARTY POOPER?

Danny Flexen ponders whether Martin will wreck the Coyle-Campbell plans

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT
★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

BOXING has a habit of wrecking even the best-laid plans. Hull lightweights **Luke Campbell** and **Tommy Coyle** appear to be on a collision course, their local rivalry seemingly heading towards a summer showdown that will decide the city's top 135-pounder and fill the football and rugby teams' KC Stadium with 25,000 paying punters. Before that logical clash can come to fruition, however, both men must pass tests at the Ice Arena in their home city and while Olympic gold medallist Campbell should comfortably vanquish a late-notice opponent – Luke only recently returned to the bill after withdrawing due to his father's serious illness – Coyle faces a more arduous examination, over 12 rounds.

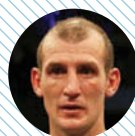


THE PRESSURE IS ON BIG FAVOURITE TOMMY COYLE TO WIN IMPRESSIVELY

Martin Gethin, of Walsall, may have lost three of his last four but at a good level and, as a former English (twice) and British champion at this weight, has already achieved feats that Coyle has not. A brief flirtation with world-class competition resulted in creditable but painful defeat, in seven to Ammeth Diaz in 2013. Pre-fight criticisms that Gethin did not deserve the IBF final eliminator were vindicated there as Martin was dropped three times and ultimately well beaten.

Two more losses followed, a tight one in ceding the Lonsdale Belt to Derry Mathews and a retirement setback to Terry Flanagan, who was on top before Gethin's ear injury forced an anti-climactic finish. Last time out, Gethin squeaked past decent journeyman Kevin McCauley on a technical decision after picking up a cut left eye. The Coyle fight will show if all the ambition has been knocked out of Gethin who, at his best, is a fit, industrious operator with a tight guard and adept inside game.

The pressure is on big favourite Coyle to win impressively and keep alive the regional superfight with Campbell. Tommy is big for the weight,



EXPERT VIEW

DERRY MATHEWS
HAS FOUGHT BOTH MEN

IN the first few rounds I think Gethin might try to get Coyle out of there but Tommy has a good engine and home advantage. Gethin will give it his all because it's his last chance. I boxed him when he was at his peak but he's not been at his best since. Tommy's speed, movement and volume of shots will get to Gethin in the end. Tommy could get a late stoppage or, if not, win on points.

strong and hits hard. He can be tagged and hurt – Mathews, well behind on points, walloped him with a fight-ending left hook in 2013 – but showed serious resilience when rising from the canvas four times to stop Daniel Brizuela in a crazy fight just over a year ago. Coyle tends to employ good head movement early on, finding angles for his mostly educated shots, but has a propensity to become reckless as he tires and finds it hard to resist a shootout.

If Coyle, who destroyed the ghost of Michael Katsidis last time out in October, succumbs to a tear-up here, he will afford Gethin a chance, because while he is the bigger, more powerful man, his rival needs to get close to have any hope. If Coyle shows uncharacteristic discipline to box from mid and long-range, he can gradually break Gethin down for a stoppage around the ninth.

Quality chief support sees Colne's 20-0 (6) **Shayne Singleton** defend his WBC International Silver welterweight title against fast-rising **Sam Eggington**, 13-2 (7), of Stourbridge.

Eggington is taller and generally bigger; Singleton scored a controversial points win over Curtis Woodhouse at light-welter only two years ago. Sam has also mixed in – and brutalised – the better company. Johnny Garton, who recently won the Southern Area belt and Denton Vassell, the ex ABA and Commonwealth king, have been halted by the Midlander, while Dave Ryan, now Commonwealth champion in the division below, was outscored.

Eggington is tough and well-schooled, plus his power seems to be increasing with every fight. Apart from the Woodhouse win and an impressive third-round stoppage of then-8-0 Steve Jevons, Singleton has fought mostly trialhorses. He can dig but has a wide guard and paws his jab at times; he can also be a touch raw when attacking. Eggington is four years younger at 21 but has matured far more rapidly as a pro and can take a stoppage by the seventh of this 10-rounder.

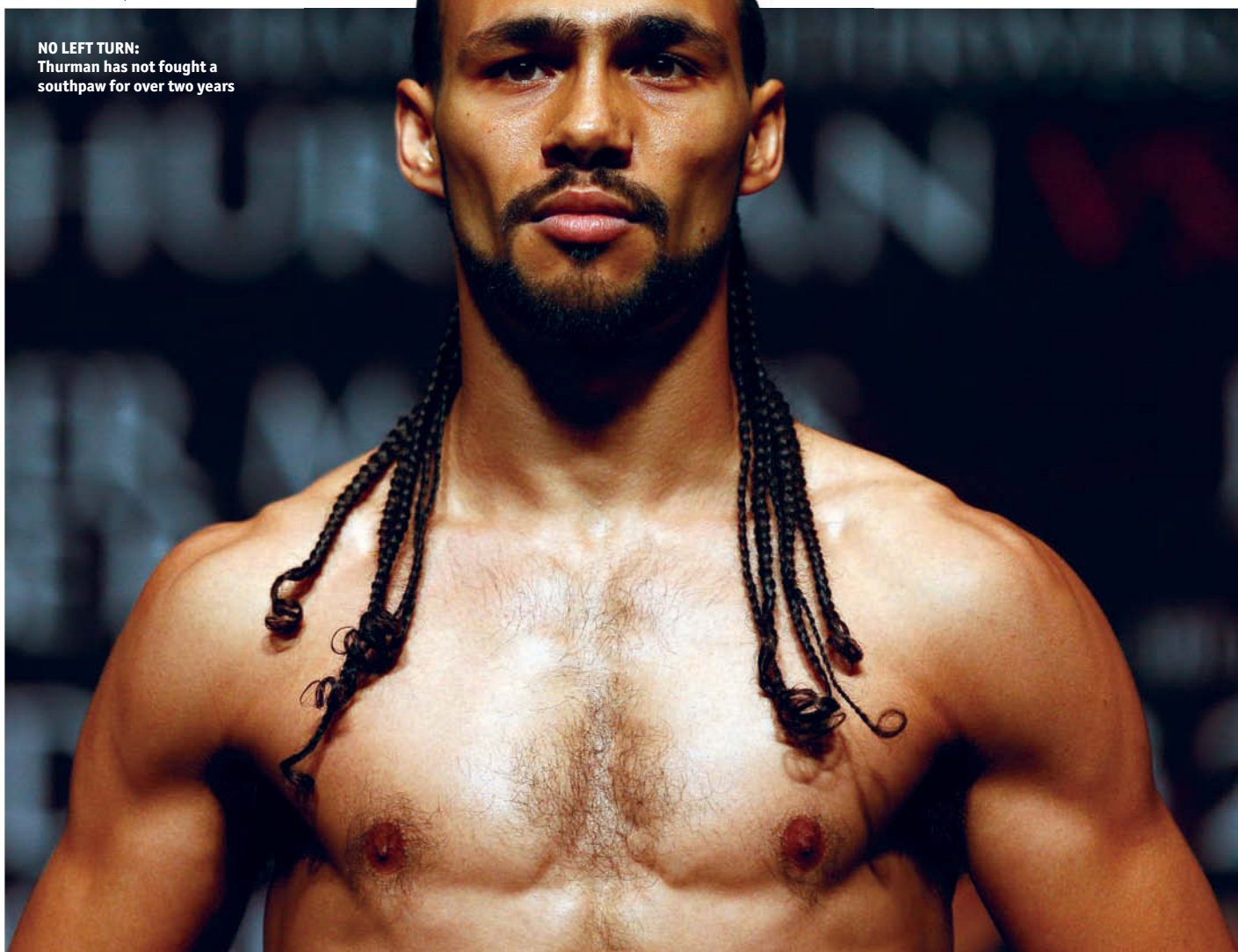
THE VERDICT Coyle must adhere to a sensible plan to make this task easier for himself.

TALE OF THE TAPE

| TOMMY COYLE | MARTIN GETHIN |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| @TommyCoyle89 | @Martin_Gethin |
| Sep 2, 1989/25 | Nov 16, 1983/31 |
| Hull | Walsall |
| English | English |
| 5ft 7ins | 5ft 6ins |
| 20-2 (9) | 25-6-1 (11) |
| Orthodox | Orthodox |
| Sep 18, 2009/20 | Nov 18, 2004/21 |
| Jamie Moore | Errol Johnson |
| 3 | 4 |
| 1/1 | 1/0 |
| 12-ROUNDERS COMPLETED/WON | 1/0 |

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/JASON CAIRNDUFF

NO LEFT TURN:
Thurman has not fought a southpaw for over two years



INTO THE MAINSTREAM

Thurman-Guerrero headlines as boxing bags a primetime position on free-to-air TV in the US, writes Paul Wheeler

★★★★☆ MAIN EVENT
★★★★☆ UNDERCARD

DATE: Saturday March 7
VENUE: MGM Grand, Las Vegas, Nevada
PROMOTER: Goossen Tutor Promotions
TELEVISION: NBC (US)

ON THE LINE

An Interim WBA world welterweight title-holder since knocking out Diego Chaves in July 2013, **Keith Thurman** was upgraded to 'regular' world champion in January. It is this belt that is up for grabs on Saturday, although the WBA's true ruler at 147lbs is undoubtedly Super champ Floyd Mayweather. **Robert Guerrero** is ranked at number four in the governing body's ratings.

BACKGROUND

The bout headlines the inaugural show of influential adviser Al Haymon's

Premier Boxing Champions series, which is bringing the sport back to a regular primetime slot on free TV in the States.

STRENGTHS

Floridian Thurman, 24-0 (21) 1NC, has an eye-catching 84 per cent KO ratio, which is quite surprising considering he is not your typical aggressive puncher. Although he can slug it out, the confident 26-year-old prefers to box and move, drawing his rivals in on the backfoot, before unleashing his bruising blows, which he is comfortable doing with either hand. His versatility, strength and speed are other strings to his bow.

A former IBF featherweight and super-feather titlist who has also picked

up Interim world straps at lightweight and welter, Gilroy southpaw Guerrero, 32-2-1 (18) 2NC, is now beginning to resemble a fully-fledged 147-pounder

GUERRERO POSSESSES IMMENSE MENTAL FORTITUDE

after moving up to the weight class in 2012. Vastly experienced and equally at ease fighting on the inside or outside, the Californian possesses immense mental fortitude,

having helped his wife overcome leukaemia. His resilience outside the ring is matched by his toughness inside it, with his heart and chin having never been questioned.

WEAKNESSES:

Guerrero, 31, is without doubt the best opponent Thurman has been pitched

in with during his career thus far, so the Clearwater native cannot afford to have an off-day against "The Ghost". Keith has not fought a lefty since Carlos Quintana in November 2012 (w rsf 4), so he will need to adapt quickly to his adversary's portside stance.

Unlike Thurman, Guerrero is not a natural welterweight. He was a reputable banger at feather, but the knockouts have dried up somewhat as he has progressed through the divisions – he has not registered an inside-schedule victory since stopping Roberto Arrieta in eight in April 2010. Furthermore, his handspeed and movement are not at Thurman's level.

PAST FORM

After scoring eight opening-session successes in his first eight contests, Thurman has continued to rack up the early wins, with only three of his foes having heard the final bell to date. He dismissed Jesus Soto Karass inside the distance in 2013, and also recorded a shutout points triumph against Jan Zaveck. Julio Diaz was hammered into retirement by "One Time" last April (rtd 3), while previously unbeaten Leonard Bundu was dropped and utterly dominated over 12 in December.

Following successful stints at feather through to lightweight (aside from a technical draw with Julian Rodriguez, a split decision defeat to Gamaliel Diaz and a couple of No Contests), Guerrero has won three out of four at welter, with his only reverse coming comprehensively on the scorecards in May 2013 against boxing's pound-for-pound king, Mayweather. A trio of unanimous verdict victories against Selcuk Aydin (July 2012), Andre Berto (November 2012) and Yoshihiro Kamegai (June 2014) are not to be sniffed at.

WHAT THEY SAY

Thurman: "I'm truly looking forward to headlining the first show [of the *Premier Boxing Champions* series]. I'm happy to be back at the MGM Grand and looking forward to a great knockout."

Guerrero: "It's very refreshing to know that NBC is bringing boxing back to primetime television. It's an honour to be a part of it, especially against an undefeated champion like Thurman. He claims that he's going to knock me out, but I see a totally different result."

OUTCOME

Despite his impressive power-punching statistics, Thurman will afford Guerrero the respect he deserves. He won't rush ahead, looking to immediately bowl the West Coast fighter over. Instead, he will invite Robert in, offload his shots and then get out of the danger zone.



THE POP STOPS:
Guerrero does not appear to possess fight-ending power at 147lbs

TALE OF THE TAPE

| KEITH THURMAN | | ROBERT GUERRERO |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| @keiththurmanjr | | @GHOSTBOXING |
| Nov 23, 1988/26 | DOB/AGE | Mar 27, 1983/31 |
| Clearwater, FL | HOMETOWN | Gilroy, CA |
| American | NATIONALITY | American |
| 5ft 7 1/2ins | HEIGHT | 5ft 8ins |
| 69ins | REACH | 70ins |
| 24-0 (21) 1NC | RECORD | 32-2-1 (18) 2NC |
| Orthodox | STANCE | Southpaw |
| Nov 9, 2007/18 | DEBUT/AGE | Apr 22, 2001/18 |
| Dan Birmingham | TRAINER | Ruben Guerrero |
| 84 | KO% | 49 |
| 2/2 | 12-ROUNDERS COMPLETED/WON | 7/5 |

As he did last time out against Kamegai, Guerrero will discharge a multitude of strikes and attempt to pressurise and unsettle Thurman. The challenger will have his moments, but Keith can maintain his composure and keep hold of his crown with a clear points win.

UNDERCARD

Chief support sees three-division world belt-holder **Adrien Broner**, 29-1 (22) 1NC, face ex-WBC lightweight title contestant **John Molina**, 27-5 (22), over 12 stanzas at light-welterweight.

After losing his WBA world welter prize – and unbeaten record – to Marcos Maidana in December 2013 via unanimous decision, brash Broner began his rebuilding process last year with unanimous points successes of his own against Carlos Molina and Emanuel Taylor down at light-welter – a weight category that looks more suited to the

flashy 25-year-old from Cincinnati, who is only just over 5ft 6ins.

Covina's Molina, 32, is aiming to bounce back himself, following losses to Lucas Matthyse (ko 11) and Humberto Soto (ud 10) in 2014. Despite losing four of his last seven, the rangy Californian has claimed notable victories over Dannie Williams (ko 4) and Mickey Bey (rsf 10) during this period.

An all-action competitor with a hefty dig, Molina will strive to drag Broner into deep waters as Maidana did. However, "The Problem" seems less sluggish at 140lbs than at 147. With the momentum back in his mitts, heavy-handed Adrien may be able to break his gutsy opponent down for a late stoppage, although Molina is likely to tough it out and hear the final bell before falling on points.

Another three-weight world boss, 29-year-old California-based Mexican **Abner**

Mares, 28-1-1 (15), also looks set to have his hand raised. The Montebello man meets countryman **Arturo Santos Reyes**, 18-4 (5), in a featherweight 10-rounder.

Nogales' Reyes, 29, has mixed in good company, so will not be overawed by opposing Mares. Abner, though,

has comfortably won two on the spin since being sensationally knocked out in a round by Jhonny Gonzalez in August 2013. He can continue his revival by prevailing on the cards.

THE VERDICT The pressure is on the featured fighters to captivate a vast television audience.



EXPERT VIEW

LEONARD BUNDU
RECENT
THURMAN FOE

THURMAN'S strength is his power, but he's also a really good boxer with good movement. We need to see how he handles a fight on the inside because Guerrero is a guy who comes to fight. If Guerrero can cut the ring off and get Thurman in a corner, I don't know how he'll handle it. I tried to cut the ring off but wasn't so successful. Guerrero has heart and courage but I don't know how long he can fight with that style in front of someone who hits so hard. I think Thurman wins in the middle-to-late rounds.



HARD TO STOMACH:
Brash Broner is expected to beat Molina
Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE

EAST WORK

Sergey Kovalev is carving out his own niche,
rather than be lost in the shuffle



**Donald
McRae**

*Special features
writer*

FOR a long time I never wanted a nickname," Sergey Kovalev says quietly as he reflects on the way his life has changed since he began fighting professionally in America nearly six years ago. He might now be known as "Krusher", and regarded alongside Gennady Golovkin as the hardest-hitting fighter in boxing, but Kovalev resisted any easy shortcuts. These days Kovalev and Golovkin are routinely hailed as "Beasts from the East", and acclaimed as more interesting fighters than the controlling Floyd Mayweather, the only boxer who can legitimately argue to be clearly ahead of them in the

pound-for-pound rankings.

"I just wanted to be Sergey Kovalev, nothing else," he says. "I see no good idea in a nickname. But Kathy Duva, my promoter, told me that people in America don't remember Russian names. They get confused with Russian fighters. They can't tell you the difference between Sergey Kovalev and Alexander Povetkin and Ruslan Provodnikov. It is like we are the same guy."

Kovalev is an unassuming man, for all his controlled ferocity in the ring, and he sighs in mild disbelief. Those three Russian names are as distinct as the differences between a limited heavyweight like Povetkin, an unbeaten multiple world champion light-heavy in Kovalev and an inconsistent 147-pounder such as Provodnikov. "Kathy explained that people will recognise me more if I get a good nickname. She thinks a long time and says, 'You

are more than just a knockout guy. You are crushing your opponents. You are 'Krusher'."

There is a small pause, a little laugh and the 31-year-old Kovalev makes his concession: "I think about it and, now, I like it. 'Krusher' is a good nickname."

Ironically, just as he has grown used to his ring alias, Sergey Kovalev has become a household name in world boxing. His performance last November in comprehensively outpointing Bernard Hopkins, dominating and even outboxing the wily old American, sealed his rise. Hopkins was 49 years old but he remained such a formidable presence that many boxing insiders actually believed he might beat Kovalev. Instead, the Russian gave the American veteran, who has always loved nicknames, from "The Executioner" to "The Alien", such a beating that it was almost embarrassing. Kovalev showed mental toughness, composure and boxing technique which surprised many who had dismissed him as a one-dimensional bully ready to be exposed by an old master in Hopkins.

"I like everything about the Hopkins fight," Kovalev says, understandably. "It was a fight in the mind. Who had the strongest mind? Who is smarter? It showed I can be very smart. And I have patience too. That was so important. I was patient and I box smart."

Kovalev pays a glowing tribute to his trainer, John David Jackson, who had fought Hopkins in 1997. He might have been stopped in seven rounds that night but, as a coach, Jackson understood what Kovalev needed to do against Hopkins.

"He helped me so much," Kovalev says of Jackson. "We work a lot on the mind and the strategy. The most important thing was I need to keep my mind cold. It was a hot atmosphere but he told me to stay calm and patient and cold. ➤

**SERGEY
★ KOVALEV ★**
THE McRAE FEATURE
BOXING



UNASSUMING:
Kovalev is as understated as his
punches are overpowering
Photo: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA

► I did not have to look for the knockout. Just outbox Hopkins. If the knockout happens it is great but it will be also good to win on decision. We won a very clear decision. It was not just unanimous. It was a big victory."

Hopkins' most admirable achievement that night was withstanding a brutal barrage of punches that Kovalev unleashed in the last round. "I was surprised he didn't go down," Kovalev admits. "I was shocked. I think he has a very hard head."

Kovalev laughs dryly in admiration of Hopkins' extraordinary resilience and courage. "For the last one-and-a-half minutes I gave him so much punishment. I wanted to stop him. He lost balance and he nearly went down. But he was still there at the end."

Does he like Hopkins, now that the old warrior is no longer trying to unsettle him? "I like him," Kovalev says. "I have very big respect for him. We respect each other a lot. I sent him birthday wishes [when Hopkins turned 50 in January] and I wished happiness and good health for him. He was a great champion."

Kovalev, meanwhile, steels himself for his next test, against Jean Pascal on March 14 in Montreal. Hopkins beat Pascal, and also drew with him, but Carl Froch is the only other fighter to have defeated the Quebec-based Haitian.

It was one of the hardest nights of Froch's career. Kovalev will enter the ring as an overwhelming favourite – but he is sharply aware of Pascal's attributes.

"He is a strong puncher, but he is a good boxer too. And he is a tough guy. I don't think he has ever been knocked down. That makes him dangerous."

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



BACK HOME

Kovalev on his childhood and family

I HAD such a happy life as a boy in Russia. I felt free. With my parents I lived in Chelyabinsk, which is a city to the east of the Ural mountains. I have had to miss a lot in coming to America. My wife Natalia is still in Russia, and she had our baby [last October] when I was training for Hopkins. Maybe two minutes after it happened I saw them on Skype. It was the greatest day of my life – having my son Aleksandr. He is very well. But Natalia had to do it [give birth] on her own. This year I have had to go to Puerto Rico, New York and Big Bear [California] for my training camp. I am missing them. But I was back in Russia for three weeks after the Hopkins fight and it was a wonderful time. They showed the Hopkins fight on a television channel in Russia and so there was lots of media interest. It was great. I also had a lot of celebrations with my friends and family. It was wonderful to be home.

Does Kovalev expect a harder night in the ring against Pascal after his near-shutout of Hopkins in Atlantic City? "It's difficult to

compare because they are two very different boxers. Bernard is very smart, very sneaky. He can be dirty. Jean comes to fight. He can punch hard. And he can take hard punches. It is very interesting to see what he can show me on March 14. Everybody is saying how tough he

is but they say that of many opponents. They say some of these guys can beat me. But it's a very different story in the ring."

“
**I DON'T MAKE
PREDICTIONS.
I JUST GO IN
THERE TO WIN**
”

This is the closest Kovalev comes to being cocky and I press him for a prediction, wondering if he expects a trademark crushing knockout. At the moment 23 of his 26 victories (one draw) have been earned by stoppage – which means that his knockout percentage is 85 per cent.

"I don't make predictions," Kovalev says coyly. "I just go in there to win. I don't have problems with Pascal. Our press conferences have been good. Everybody was polite. Easy work."

Kovalev made his debut in 2009 in Greensboro, North Carolina – a one-round stoppage of the unknown Daniel Chavez who was also fighting professionally for the first time. His early years saw him rack up wins in obscure American towns and cities like



'KRUSHED':
Kovalev [left] stops
Blake Caparelo in the second

Photo: NAOIKI FUKUDA

'ALIEN' ABDUCTION:
Kovalev [right] outboxes Hopkins
for a wide points decision
Photo: NAOKI FUKUDA



Fairfax and Tacoma, Louisville and Lafayette. For a long time he and his manager, Egis Klimas, struggled to make money and gain recognition.

"We travelled all over the country," Sergey recalls. "I would fight anyone, anywhere. It was hard but I never gave up my dream. Ever since I was a small boy in Russia I had a dream to be someone. I told Egis America was a country where people see their dreams come true. It takes a long time but now I am in great fights, with lots of attention. I had to work so hard to get here."

Kovalev has had a couple of fights in Russia and, in November 2011, tragedy struck. He fought his countryman Roman Simakov in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg. Simakov had a decent 19-1-1 record but Kovalev stopped him early in round seven. It soon emerged that Simakov had taken such a brutal beating that he fell into a coma. Kovalev was distraught and he immediately paid for his stricken opponent's parents to fly to Yekaterinburg. They remained at their son's bedside while Kovalev and his wife, Natalia, prayed for Simakov. Three days later, Simakov died.

"If I ever step in the ring again, I will dedicate my next fight to Roman," Kovalev wrote on his website a few days later. "All of my earnings will be sent to his family. Forgive me, Roman ... Rest in Peace, Warrior."

I broach an enduringly difficult subject carefully. "No comment," Kovalev says bluntly.

I try again, highlighting his compassionate statement to Simakov's family, for such a devastating incident must still haunt Kovalev in his most introspective moments. "I think of his family," Kovalev says after a painful pause.

"I think only good thoughts but I don't want to talk about it."

Klimas, who helps out with translation, steps in to make an

even more emphatic point. "Sergey has no comment to make. We never give any comments about Roman Simakov."

Such a stance is understandable even if it is noticeable that Kovalev's knockout ratio has not dipped since that fatality. Many boxers whose opponents have died are never the same again and even avoid looking for a knockout punch. Kovalev has retained his frightening power while emerging as a decent and rounded man outside the ring.

A possible explanation is his military service. When I interviewed Hopkins last November he suggested that one of the reasons he found it difficult to unhinge the Russian was that Kovalev had been a soldier in the Russian army. Perhaps that disciplined detachment has helped Kovalev. Would he agree that it was a factor in him withstanding Hopkins' typical psychological warfare?

"Yes, of course," Kovalev confirms. "I was in the military one year and it teaches you to be strong."

Klimas points out, proudly, that "Sergey was also a highly decorated military officer."

Kovalev is certainly very different to Adonis Stevenson, even if the WBC light-heavyweight champion is another fearsome hitter. Stevenson is also, like Pascal, a Haitian based in Quebec, but his reputation outside the ring is streaked with notoriety. A unification clash between Stevenson and Kovalev, who holds the WBA, IBF and WBO versions of the title, would be one of the most riveting fights of 2015. Yet it often seems as if Stevenson is avoiding a showdown with "Krusher". Does Kovalev sense any trepidation in the otherwise swaggering Stevenson?

"I don't want to talk about him," Kovalev says. "There is no reason. I must beat Pascal and then after that I have to defend my IBF title against [mandatory challenger] Nadjib Mohammedi. After that, if Stevenson will stay WBC champion, I will be very happy to have a unification fight."

Strikingly, for a man who says he never makes predictions, Kovalev cackles and produces a withering dismissal of Stevenson.

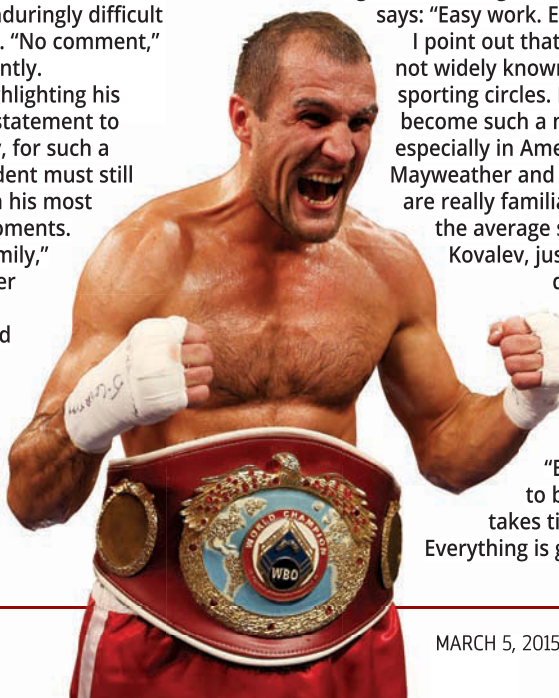
Asked if he anticipates a difficult fight against the dangerous Stevenson, Kovalev says: "Easy work. Easy! No problem."

I point out that Kovalev is still not widely known in more general sporting circles. Boxing has become such a narrow world that, especially in America, only Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao are really familiar fight names to the average sports fan. Sergey Kovalev, just like Golovkin,

deserves widespread recognition. He is more than just a "Krusher" for the boxing anorak.

"Thank you," Kovalev says.

"But I have learned to be patient. It just takes time. It's no problem. Everything is going great." **BN**



Photos: ESTHER LIN/SHOWTIME & ACTION IMAGES/PETER CZIBORRA



GYM DEMONS:
Mayweather constantly
refines his skills, while rival
Pacquiao [right] trains
like a man possessed

TRAIN LIKE THE BEST

Two fighters reveal what it's like to work alongside Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao

ASHLEY THEOPHANE

London's light-welter contender has trained with Mayweather since 2012



THE BEGINNING

THE first time I went to train with Floyd was in 2012. I was the British champ and I was training in New York. I came over to Floyd's gym for a two-week change. On my first day, Floyd stopped me as I was walking by and asked who I was. I told him I was the British champion and what my record was and he said we might spar. Every day he was cool with me. Now I've been training at the gym for two years, I've seen loads of fighters come and go and Floyd didn't notice them so me joining his team was meant to be.

HARD WORK, DEDICATION

I'VE been in the Wild Card when Manny Pacquiao and Amir Khan were there and I watched them spar. Floyd trains harder than any world champion I've ever been around.

Some days you might come in and you think, 'When is this man gonna stop?' Strength and endurance is what he does, which is why any time of year he looks on weight or a few pounds over.

He's worth so much money but he trains like a poor man. It's all about the money, boxing has brought Floyd a great lifestyle so it motivates him.

ALWAYS ADAPT

HE tries to be an all-round trainer, including yoga. Now he's got [strength and conditioning coach] Alex Ariza here so he's thinking that as he's getting older, he always says, 'It's not about training harder, it's training smarter.' He listens to his body more, and if he doesn't feel good he'll walk out of the gym.

PERFORM FOR THE CROWD

FLOYD has his own training time, but you can train at the same time as him; there are so many people watching though, you can't get your own workout done, so I'd rather just watch. Fans are allowed to watch for free if there is space in the gym which is cool and that motivates him, that so many people wanna watch him.

BE AN INDIVIDUAL

THERE are specific things Floyd does, like he doesn't train or spar to the three-minute bell. We push ourselves more, beyond the three minutes' work then one-minute rest we were taught as amateurs. That's been the biggest difference to what I'd experienced before. Sparring depends on the mood he's in, some days he'll go hard but others he'll just work on defence or specific things. In the camp for Saul Alvarez, it wasn't physically demanding but mentally demanding, you had to think and be sharp, because he will notice your set routine; we all have a tell.



DEAN BYRNE

The Irishman worked alongside Pacquiao from 2009-2012



FIRST CONTACT

I WAS coming back from Australia, where I'd been fighting and I'd been back in England for a month or two. I was going to Boston to team up with Micky Ward – I met him in the Wild Card gym a year or two later – but I went to LA instead because Paschal Collins, the trainer, told me Freddie Roach would be the man if I wanted to learn my trade. I went to the Wild Card and asked Freddie if he'd train me. I was in the gym for six months before I met Pacquiao. For the first Juan Manuel Marquez fight they were looking for sparring partners and Freddie said, 'We want you to spar Manny.' We did four rounds, full-on sparring.

PUSH THE LIMITS

AFTER that spar Manny said, 'He's in' and then I'd go running with him and sparring him three

days a week. Then I'd only do two-three rounds each time because he'd have three-four sparring partners; he wants fresh guys all the time. He's one of the hardest trainers I've ever come across. He trains like a monster. If you can keep up with Manny Pacquiao, you know you're a good runner, I only used to because I was inspired to be like him; he just takes off. It's more long distance but he's explosive as well.

BE HUMBLE AND RUTHLESS

HE'S inspired by people coming in and watching him, he was just Manny and stayed the same. I learnt from him to work hard and remain humble. But I've seen bigger fellas come in, everybody wants to take out Freddie Roach fighters, people try to make a name for themselves, and Manny would just take them out.

EXPERIMENT

THEY used to get a bamboo stick and whack him around the body with it, as it deadens the muscles in the body. I only did it once!

He also has a square box and he bounces up and down on that for five-10 minutes after all his work is finished.

In the ring he's always bouncing in and out, his calves are massive and I think that box thing is one of the reasons.



**BOXINGNEWSONLINE.NET
/FIGHTING-FIT**

**WHAT'S HOT IN THE WORLDS
OF TRAINING, TECHNIQUE,
NUTRITION AND GEAR**



S&C FOR BOXING PT 1

Top coach Cameron Goff provides the routine for building strength, in our special series



INSIDE 'SMIGGA'S' CAMP

Read about how Paul Smith prepared for his recent rematch with Arthur Abraham



GET BACK IN SHAPE

Expert nutritionist Dr. James Morton provides top tips to restart training



THE BEST GEAR

We review some of the finest products on the market, including gloves and clothing



RDX THE FIGHTERS CHOICE

GLOVES



**RED PRO
BOXING
GLOVES**



**ADVANCE GEL
BOXING
GLOVES**



**ULTIMATE
LEATHER BOXING
GLOVES**



**LEATHER FIGHT
BOXING
GLOVES**

ACCESSORIES



**RED GYM
KIT BAG**



**LEATHER BOXING
DOUBLE END
SPEED BALL**



**LEATHER SKIPPING
SPEED ROPE
ADJUSTABLE
WEIGHTED**



**GENUINE LEATHER
MEDICINE
BALL**

PUNCH BAGS AND GUARDS



**LEATHER
HEAD
GUARD**



**FILLED
HEAVY PUNCH
BAG IN GOLD**



**CHEST BODY
PROTECTOR
GUARD**



**FILLED
HEAVY PUNCH
BAG IN RED**

FIND US AT

WWW.RDXSPORTS.COM
WE'RE ALSO ON EBAY AND AMAZON

"TRAIN LIKE A PRO"

AMIR KHAN
IS WEARING:
**GEL LITE
LINING GLOVES**

A GREAT HANDMADE GLOVE
CONSTRUCTED OF SYNTHETIC
LEATHER WITH A TRIPLE LAYER
POLYMAX CONTOURED
PADDING, MOISTURE WICKING
MESH LINING AND
WRAPAROUND VELCRO
CLOSURE SYSTEM.

SPECIALLY DESIGNED AIR
VENTS ON THE PALM WORK TO
KEEP THE INSIDE PALM COOL
AND FRESH AT ALL TIMES.



VIEW OUR RANGE HERE
WWW.RDXSPORTS.COM

| INFO@RDXSPORTS.COM

USE THE CODE
"KHANS" TO RECEIVE A
10% DISCOUNT

VESTED *INTEREST*

Meet the personalities
at the heart of the sport
With JOHN DENNEN

THE IRISH GUERRERO



John Dennen

@BoxingNewsJD

Amateur Editor

Gary Sweeney, who boxes for the Mexican WSB team, has big aims

YOUNG Irish heavyweight Gary Sweeney, who made his World Series of Boxing debut for the Mexico Guerreros last week in London, is on a collision course with Ireland's reigning 91kgs champion Darren O'Neill.

"I've won seven Irish titles, I won the senior title in 2014. This seniors gone I was injured and Darren O'Neill moved into 91 and won it. But I'll be back to take it in 2016," says Gary. "I don't think he's big enough for the weight, coming from 75kgs in the space of a year you could say."

"I don't think he's big enough to move into that weight very fast. I've been at that weight for the last two or three years and I think I'm a bit stronger than him. Not to take anything away from him, he's a 2012 Olympian and a good boxer. Let's get in the ring in 2016 and have it out and see what happens."

"Darren O'Neill is a quality boxer. But I'm going to take it back in 2016."

Gary's older brother is professional fighter Michael Sweeney. Michael, an experienced boxer who's also been in camp sparring with world champions Wladimir Klitschko and Arthur Abraham, helps with Gary's training.

The younger Sweeney beat Jitaru Ionut-Mirel, a Romanian on the British Lionhearts franchise, in his WSB contest. "That was brilliant for me. I knew it was going to be a tough task, coming to England, I know he's a Romanian, but to beat an English side you could say. After the first three rounds, I thought I had it there," Sweeney said. "I was too comfortable and I got caught. He got me with a good shot, a left hook and I went down with it. [I recovered] straight away, once I got up I was going again. That was the first time I've been put down ever in my whole career. I never got a standing count in my life. Hopefully I never get one again... It shows it's a different style of boxing from boxing three rounds to five

rounds, you get hurt there. I got the win and I was more than happy."

"It was tough, five rounds of boxing is very tough," Gary continued. "He was a tough opponent, very strong and I was very happy to last the five rounds."

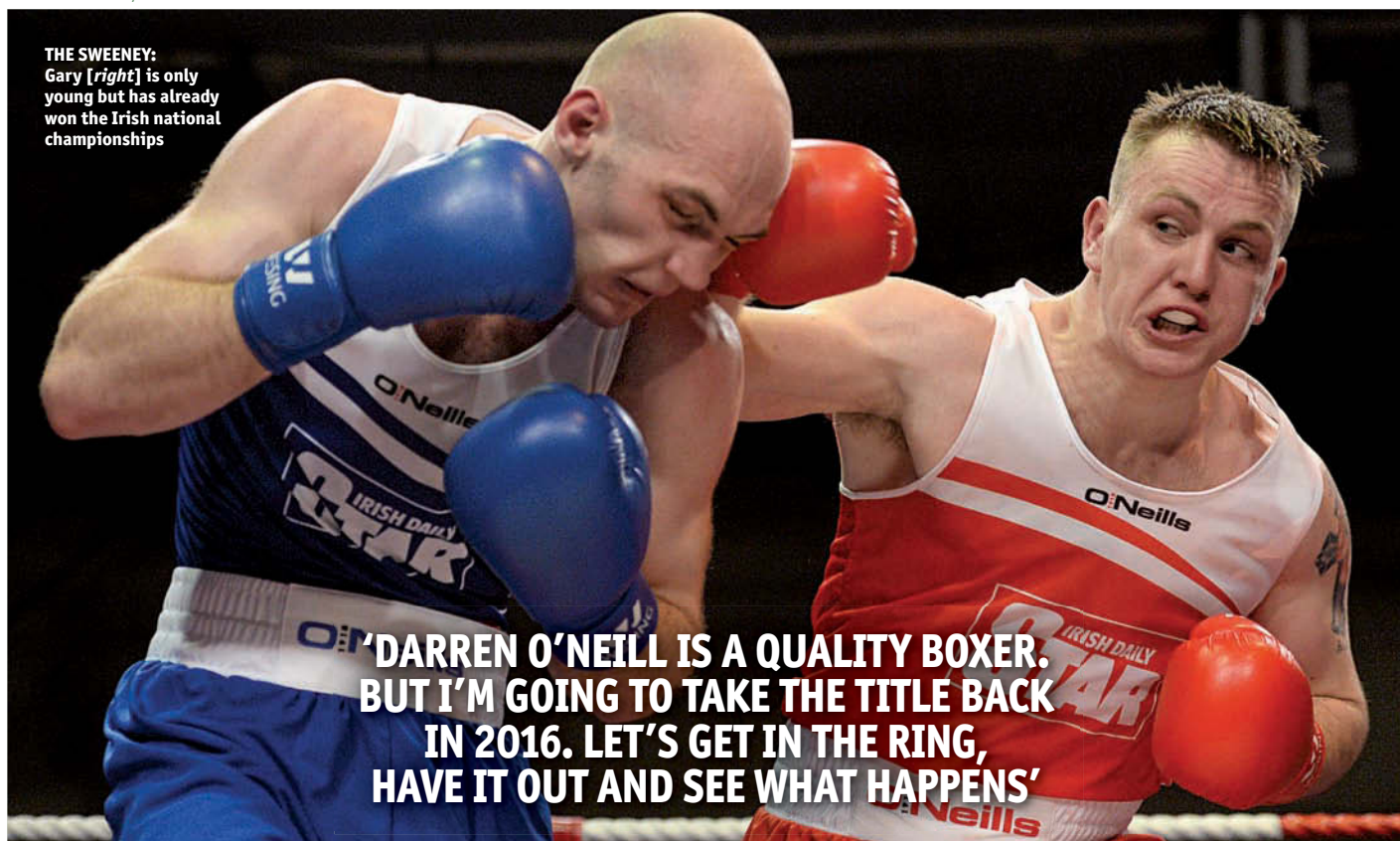
"I dug deep and I pushed him back sometimes."

While it was physically demanding, Sweeney felt he handled the level of his opponent well enough. "I've boxed in three internationals at senior level," said the 20-year-old. "This was one of the easiest fights. I think it was one of the easiest fights I've had in my internationals."

He picked up a cut, which needed stitches so may keep him out of action, but his next scheduled bout for the Guerreros is on March 13 in Morocco. "Hopefully move on now and get a few more wins under my belt and I'll be very happy," Sweeney said. "I'm very happy to get a win for Mexico Guerreros. Hopefully I get a few more wins for them and make the Olympics."

Photo: BARRY CREGG/SPORTSFILE

THE SWEENEY:
Gary [right] is only young but has already won the Irish national championships



'DARREN O'NEILL IS A QUALITY BOXER. BUT I'M GOING TO TAKE THE TITLE BACK IN 2016. LET'S GET IN THE RING, HAVE IT OUT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS'



ON TWITTER
@BoxingNewsJD



ON FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/boxingnewsonline



ONLINE
www.bboxingnewsonline.net

WEB WISDOM

You got the women's flyweight article on the Youth championships wrong in your last edition. Grrr.

It was in fact BILLY JEAN FRANKS, not Jade Ashmore, who reached the 51kgs final of the England Boxing Youth championships. We apologise for last week's mistake.

Don't know what to say. Pure gutted, almost every Kazakh person in the arena who you met thought I won! Disgusted.

This is just a minor setback! I will be Olympic champion [in] 2016.

MICHAEL CONLAN won't be discouraged by the decision against him in Kazakhstan.

This Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao fight is becoming a disgrace where ticket prices are concerned, think it shows pro boxing for what it is, a business first and foremost. Here Floyd Mayweather, even I have more Olympic medals than you and I'm a wee midget. Unimpressed by ticket prices, PADDY BARNES unleashes a reality bomb on the world.

QUICK-FIRE Q&A

After a good showing at the Strandja, Jack Bateson is ready to face rising challenges at home

HOW was the Strandja tournament in Bulgaria?

It was good experience, good to get a few bouts... I didn't expect there to be so many countries and so many top countries.

The first lad I boxed was from Ireland, Myles Casey, he'd won their seniors this year at 52kgs. I beat him unanimously. Then I boxed the Armenian called Koryun Soghomonyan. I think he won the World Juniors and the European Youths, then he won the European under-23s so he was a good kid. I beat him on a split. It was a close fight. I won the first round, I thought I won the second, the third, I thought I definitely took that.

In the final it was [Shakhobidin] Zoirov, the Uzbekistan kid who I've actually boxed before. He's southpaw, number four in the world, I think he got a silver in the last Asian Games, he got beat by the Kazakh in the final.

'MY EXPERIENCE IS STARTING TO SHOW. I'LL BRING BACK GOLD NEXT TIME'

I was still in there, I gave it all my all, the first round was really close but then the second and third he started to take over. I struggled to keep up with his movement and the pace of the fight. I thought it was a good experience.

It's the first time I've been in with someone, [lost] and thought the better man definitely won so it was a good learning experience.

What have you got next?

Hopefully I can get out again [in the World Series of Boxing] in our next one at home. It was good to do the five rounds. Obviously it's a slower pace. I felt like it suited me and as it went on I felt I got into the fight [against Abdelhakaim Elbarka]. Sometimes in three rounds the fight has finished and I felt like I wish I could have done more. When you've got five rounds, you have a bit more time to suss your opponent out.

It's a lot more exhausting than the three rounds, when your body gets tired,

Photo: WSB



DEVELOPING:
Bateson claims a win in the World Series of Boxing

LEARNING CURVE

you start to make mistakes, the heads come together.

Are there any new flyweights coming up looking to challenge you?

On Development now are Blane Hyland and Muhammad Ali. I think Ollie Simpson's moving up to flyweight now.

There's probably about five of us that are on GB now all together. There's a good pack of flyweights again.

With the experience I've got now - I think there was 16 at my weight in the Strandja and to come back with the silver

was quite good. I feel like I'm getting a bit better now and the experience is starting to show. So hopefully I can bring back some gold medals next time.

Have you seen much of Muhammad Ali?

He's a good fighter. He's busy. He achieved a lot at Youth level. He doesn't live far from me, we've sparring hundreds of rounds so we know each other well. Blane as well, I've done a bit of sparring with him, he's good. There's definitely some good kids coming through.

MISSION 2015

We pick out a boxer who's planning on making an impact this year

SEAN McGOLDRICK

JACK BATESON (see above) wasn't the only domestic medallist at the Strandja tournament in Sofia, which finished on February 28. Wales' Sean McGoldrick reached the semi-final, where he lost to Kazakhstan's Zhanbolat Tilegenuly unanimously. He had however picked up a couple of creditable wins along the way. He beat a Russian in his first bout in Bulgaria, claiming a split decision over Mazir Balayev. In the quarter-final he also outpointed a good, experienced Moldovan Veaceslav Gojan.

Ireland's standard-bearer was middleweight Michael O'Reilly, who reached the final only to lose to Uzbekistan's Bektemir Melikuziyev.

In the process however he scored some good victories over a Kazakh, Rustam Svayev and a home boxer in Marian Momchev, as well as Georgia's Badri Khardziani.



FAST FACTS

Age: 23

From: Wales

Stance: Orthodox

Division:

Bantamweight

Title: Commonwealth

AMATEUR SCENE

The very best action, previews and news from Olympic-style boxing

With JOHN DENNEN | @BoxingNewsJD

SEND us your club's news, results or upcoming events to john.dennen@boxingnewsonline.net or 020 7618 3478

COACH'S CORNER

THE NEXT JOSHUA?



Mick Delaney

DALE YOUTH ABC

AT the moment we're just getting ready for the senior ABAs, that's the big one. In the past we've had George Groves, James DeGale, and Deion Jumah, they all won two ABA titles each. We should

be putting seven or eight lads into this year's competition and I think they'll all give it a good go, but we'll take it one bout at a time.

In any sport, you've got to be half-gifted if you want to do well and hopefully the training that they go through in our gym brings them on that little bit more.

You can tell, I think, within a year if a boxer has got something special. With DeGale and Groves you could tell from their first junior bouts they were going to be special.

We had a super-heavyweight, Danny Dubois [pictured below], win over in Durham at the [Youth championships], a national competition.

He's already a potential GB Podium Squad member up in Sheffield, he's going to be something special. He weighed in at the weekend at over 102kgs, he's a huge lad. A lot of people are saying he's going to be another Anthony Joshua, he's very heavy-handed and is a good boxer with it.

It's a long way to go but if he keeps his feet on the floor and behaves himself, I think he can go as far as Joshua.

Mick Delaney received the Henry Cooper Memorial Award for services to boxing at a charity event for Norwood and the Paskin Children's Trust.



Photos: ENGLAND BOXING / CHRIS BEVAN

BRUISED AND BEATEN

Mexican raiders leave the Lionhearts winless in three



Nick Bond

RINGSIDE

+ BETHNAL GREEN
FEBRUARY 26

IT was a night the British Lionhearts won't forget in a hurry as they were left bruised, bloodied and ultimately beaten by the marauding Mexico Guerreros.

The tone of the night at York Hall was set in the evening's first contest that saw a bright start from light-welterweight star **Sam Maxwell** given away under pressure from the rough, tough **Garcia Curiel**.

Maxwell couldn't miss the Mexican in the opening round, which he dominated behind a commanding jab and his dominance was underlined when he caught the visitor with a jolting left hook.

This is where his success ended, however. Inexplicably Maxwell abandoned his stylish boxing to get involved in a brawl with Curiel. This was the tough Mexican's kind of fight. The following four sessions saw Curiel's body punching and pressure take a toll.

All three judges gave Maxwell one round and the rest to Curiel: 49-46 twice and 49-45.

It wasn't the best start for the Lionhearts even if the York Hall faithful were lapping up the action.

As expected the Mexican's were strongest in the lower weights as **Harvey Horn** found out at light-flyweight.

The nimble southpaw was unlucky to be facing the most impressive of the Guerreros in **Joselito Velasquez** - one of only two boxers to have a win against the Cubans in the whole tournament thus far.

After another bright start for the Lionhearts, Horn got

Photos: WSB



COUNTERED: Horn [right] stands up to impressive Velasquez, while Ashfaq [inset] outboxes rough Gonzalez

dragged into a streetfight which suited Velasquez down to the ground. The Mexican was rightly warned for the exuberant use of his head and Horn likewise for holding.

The Briton had to weather some stiff punches to both head and body, but he proved his resolve against a top-level boxer. Scores: 48-45, 49-42 and 49-44, all for Velasquez.

Mexico's Irish heavyweight import **Gary Sweeney**

was too good for the Lionhearts' Romanian **Ionut-Mirel Jitaru**. The scores reflected Sweeney's superiority: 50-45 twice and 49-46.

At bantamweight, **Qais Ashfaq** restored British pride by outpointing another gritty Mexican in **Brian Gonzalez**.

The roughhouse tactics of Gonzalez were questionable as he bundled Ashfaq to the canvas repeatedly. However, the southpaw Lionheart, boxing brilliantly at times, edged home 48-47 twice and 49-46.

The Lionhearts unleashed their middleweight marvel

Antony Fowler in the final contest.

Misael Rodriguez hadn't read the script as he came close to upsetting Fowler who, after a torrid brawl, took a split decision. One judge scored 48-47 for the Mexican, the other two saw it for Fowler on the same margin.

Like his teammates before him, the classy Fowler appeared to abandon his superior technique and was drawn into a war of attrition.

Fowler was cut in the first and the third round as he traded big shots with the hard-as-nails Rodriguez. It was an exhausting battle.

The British star is still unbeaten this season in the WSB, but his cuts could be a concern as he chases qualification for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro next year.

The Lionhearts next travel to China this Friday (March 6) as they look to end a three-match losing streak. They welcome the formidable Ukraine Ottomans to York Hall on March 12.



Matt Bozeat sees an ambitious teenage heavyweight

TEENAGE heavyweight **Ryan Hatton** tuned up for the start of the England Boxing Elite championships by schooling veteran southpaw **David Jenvey** at a sold-out Glascote Working Men's Club on February 6.

At junior level, Hatton has won five national titles at 81kgs and 85kgs and now 18 years old, he's set to enter the senior championships at 91kgs.

Tamworth coach Alan Keast admits, "It's a massive step up to take." But Hatton has now had five bouts at 91kgs and he's won them all.

His latest win wasn't always good to watch. In the second round, referee Fred Davies warned both boxers: "No more holding" but didn't take any further action.

Hatton won the bout clearly enough by keeping Jenvey (Droitwich) on the outside with his jab and walking him onto left hooks and rights.

Pat Doherty, last season's National Schoolboy champion in Class A at 43kgs, celebrated his 14th birthday with a points

Photo: MARK LAWSON/PHOTODESIGNSTUDIO.CO.UK



OUTSIDE JOB: Hatton [right] uses his jab to control Jenvey

LOOK OUT FOR YOUNG HATTON

win over **Lewis Proffit** (Stoke Staffs).

Doherty will be joined in this season's Schoolboy championship by **Darren Whyte**. Keast rates the 12-year-old as a real talent and one to watch, and he looked the part in his points win over **Reiss Collett** (Wednesbury).

Whyte made sure of the points victory in the final round by coolly walking his opponent down and bloodying his nose

with classy and accurate two-fisted salvos.

Another schoolboy bout saw **George Hume** (Tamworth) ship a few rights in the opening minute of his clash with **M. Mathaanne** (Studio), but he soon had the centre of the ring, working well behind his jab and countering every punch.

The last two rounds followed a back-and-forth pattern, before Hume grabbed a deserved split decision.

QUARLESS' BRUTAL MESSAGE

Nathan records a blistering stoppage success



Chris Walker

RINGSIDE

+ LIVERPOOL

FEBRUARY 21

SALISBURY ABC got their 2015 off to an excellent start with their inaugural club show of the year at Envi Nightclub in the heart of Liverpool city centre. The famous Merseyside club proudly showed off their next generation of young talent and those involved in the day to day running of the club will be delighted with what they witnessed as the North Liverpool boxing institution prepares for the next chapter in their illustrious history.

Providing excitement on the bill was home boxer, **Nathan Quarless**, who sent out a brutal message with a blistering stoppage win over Derby Lane's **Damien Bialas**. The pair spent the opening stanza feeling each other out but the contest came to life in the following round as Quarless unleashed several eye-catching combinations. These became more frequent as the round wore on and another heavy barrage forced a sensible intervention from the third man.

Enjoying an impressive win was Schoolboy champion and local favourite, **Tom McEvoy**, who showed glimpses of brilliance against Donnington's **Brad Thompson**. McEvoy is showing all the hallmarks familiar with his club and this performance was no different as he remained in control for large portions against a game opponent. McEvoy and his trainers will be desperate to add to the youngster's honours list and his development is well worth monitoring.

Closing an eventful show was a well-matched affair between the hosts' **Chris Cain** and Golden Gloves' **Byron Abiru**. This solid encounter featured several quality exchanges as each boxer tried to stamp their authority on the bout, but every dominant spell could not be maintained as the advantage swung both ways. This bout was a testament to an evening of solid matchmaking but eventually the ringside judges awarded Cain the verdict.

Amongst the show was a series of home wins as **Ryan Dickens**, **Thomas Walker**, **Joe Carney** and **Sam Mock** all enjoyed victories and provided crucial evidence that "The Solly" have a firm platform to build their future on.

ROMFORD WOE



Daniel Herbert

RINGSIDE

+ ROMFORD

FEBRUARY 13

ROMFORD'S 20-bout open show at the RUSS Club was sadly cut short when a group of ticketless interlopers, already rebuffed earlier in the evening, turned up again at the door with weapons, demanding entry. They were kept out of the room but soon the police arrived and the organisers called the show off.

It was a shame for all those who had put hard work into the evening, which had seen the hosts bring over a combined Denmark/Sweden team. Quality West Ham duo Luke Saunders and Jordan Reynolds were among those due to feature in the nine bouts that didn't happen.

The 11 contests that did take place (all junior) were well-matched, with the only stoppage scored by **Paul Claydon Jnr**, son of Romford ABC chief Paul Claydon, and the only debatable decision the win scored by **Louis Horn** (younger brother of Harvey) over **Adam Azim**.

RESULTS:

I. NASSAR (Den) outpd J. Lee (Chalvedon) unan; T. O'BRIEN (Five Star) outpd H. Broman (Swe) unan; L. HORN (Gator) outpd A. Azim (Pinewood) unan; K. RUSSELL-MEAD (Chadwell) outpd A. Bott (Den) split; J. AHMED (Den) outpd S. Strange (Romford) split; H. HEMMINGS (Southend) outpd M. Jallaw (Den) unan; T. O'DRISCOLL (West Ham) outpd M. Hassaad (Den) unan; T. LICKFOLD (Romford) outpd J. Meir (Chalvedon) split; B. LILJEQUIST (Swe) outpd R. Waller (Five Star) unan; P. CLAYDON (Romford) stpd B. Abdi (Swe) 3rd; P. MCCARTHY (West Ham) outpd N. Burchard (Den) unan.

FEDERATION PRICE FREEZE

England Boxing pegs membership costs

ENGLAND BOXING has kept membership fees at the same level for the last three years. For the season 2015-16 clubs will pay £217 per year to be a member, and boxers will pay £11. Coaches, officials, volunteers, referees and judges will pay £22.

In a statement England Boxing notes this revenue "does not contribute towards staff salaries and is ringfenced for reinvestment in the sport, where it goes towards funding a range of activities such as the national championships (at all levels) and support and development for Team England. Funds are also allocated towards child protection, insurance, governance, anti-doping and disciplinary protocols."

This Week In BOXING HISTORY

Photo: ACTION IMAGES/ANDREW COULDRIDGE



HEATING UP:
Calzaghe [left]
and Lacy get
ready to rumble

WE GO AGAINST JOE

Our prediction
says that Lacy
will win, writes
Daniel Herbert

ACCORDING to this paper's front cover nine years ago, it was "The Fight We've Been Waiting For" – Joe Calzaghe against Jeff Lacy, which would crown the king of the super-middles in Manchester.

Inside, our preview said that Calzaghe "finally gets the defining fight he has long craved", just a few weeks before his 34th birthday and after reigning as WBO 168lb king since 1997. We said: "Joe has

been struggling desperately to make the weight (win or lose, he moves up to light-heavyweight afterwards), seems to be suffering more injuries than ever (he has always been injury-prone), has fought only five times in the last three years and has been down in two of them (Lacy has never been down)."

We also asserted that the Welsh southpaw "hasn't delivered a great

performance since he stopped Byron Mitchell in two sensational rounds in June 2003 in Cardiff."

We did note that Lacy hadn't really been tested in his 21 fights, but picked him to win on points – which turned out to be utterly wrong as Calzaghe put on a masterclass to outscore the American widely over 12 rounds for his 42nd straight win.

BAD BET FROM VARGAS

EDITOR Claude Abrams reported ringside from Las Vegas where two Californians clashed in Shane Mosley and Fernando Vargas. Mosley won by injury stoppage in the 10th of a scheduled 12-rounder, "inconclusively" for Abrams.

Wrote Claude, "Vargas suffered a ghastly swelling over his left eye that started in the first and grew dramatically from the sixth to such an extent that he had no vision from that optic by the ninth.

"Referee Joe Cortez allowed him to start – following a deliberation

with the doctor and Nevada Commission Executive Director Marc Ratner – the 10th. But Cortez halted it 82 seconds later, once Mosley began to zero in on the injury with a succession of rights."

At the pre-fight press conference Vargas had boldly made a \$100,000 wager that Shane could not knock him out, which Mosley "really had no choice but to accept", we said. After losing inside the distance, Fernando agreed to pay up.

RING WOE FOR FERRANS

THERE was a meaningful bill-topper in Leeds where local puncher Carl Johanneson crushed Scotland's Andrew Ferrans in two rounds in a final eliminator for the British super-featherweight title. Carl had halted Ferrans in six a couple of years earlier.

Yet this rematch almost didn't go ahead after Ferrans' manager Tommy Gilmour reckoned the ring was below regulation size. We reported: "The rulebook says the minimum inside-the-ropes measurement for such a bout is

16ft and when a tape measure was finally procured from deep within the bowels of the ornate Town Hall it transpired the measurement across the ring was indeed short, by around 8ins. It was decided following consultation that the bout should go ahead regardless."

All this mattered because Johanneson was a powerfully built banger and Ferrans a tall boxer. But when all was said and done, Carl was just a level above his Scottish opponent.

PRO-BOX™
UNITED KINGDOM



'QUICK RINGS'

Fully Assembled in 20 minutes

12ft Ring with 10ft fight area. W/O mats £1095 / C/W mats £1325
14ft Ring with 12ft fight area. W/O mats £1125 / C/W mats £1475
16ft Ring with 14ft fight area. W/O mats £1155 / C/W mats £1495
18ft Ring with 16ft fight area. W/O mats £1195 / C/W mats £1675
20ft Ring with 18ft fight area. W/O mats £1225 / C/W mats £1695
Mainland UK delivery £75.00

Free brochure available NOW

Tel: 01634 581888

www.pro-box.co.uk

OFFICIAL MEMORABILIA WORLD BOXING COUNCIL




Register on our new website:
www.wbcme.co.uk



Great gift ideas | Full ranges available!

E-mail : sales@wbcme.co.uk

Take a **FREE 30-day trial** of the **BOXING NEWS** App

1. OPEN THE  APP STORE
2. DOWNLOAD THE BOXING NEWS APP
3. CLICK SUBSCRIBE FOR
'6 MONTHS' OR '12 MONTHS'
4. DOWNLOAD YOUR ISSUES

Like what you see?
After 30 days, you can
show us the **MONEY.**



www.boxingnewsonline.net/apps

The 30-day free trial entitles individuals to four full-priced digital issues of Boxing News and is currently only available for apple devices. The offer is only available for new subscribers through the App store. To redeem this offer you must have a valid Apple ID. Upon registration for the trial, your method of payment will be authorised. We will begin billing you at the end of the free trial. It is possible to cancel your subscription between the first day your subscription was authorised and the 30th day of your trial. To do this launch the App Store, tap 'Featured', scroll down and tap your 'Apple ID', sign in, 'Manage App Subscriptions', select 'Boxing News' and turn off the subscription.

JAMES TENNYSON

Paul Wheeler talks to a man who fights to unite

When and why you started boxing:

I was a short-tempered and energetic seven-year-old, so my mum contacted a local boxing club and that's where it all started.

Favourite all-time fighter:

Muhammad Ali with his fast and smooth boxing style, plus his attitude and confidence.

Best fight you've seen:

The Rumble in the Jungle – Muhammad Ali-George Foreman [Ali won via eighth-round knockout in October 1974].

Personal career highlight:

Becoming the youngest Irish champion in 80 years at just 19 by beating Mickey Coveney [rsf 2 – April 2013].

Toughest opponent:

Ian Bailey gave me a great fight [w pts 8 – May 2014].

Best and worst attributes as a boxer:

My strengths are my punching power and engine. My weakness is a lack of pro experience.

Training tip:

Always give it 110 per cent. You only get out what you put in.

Favourite meal/restaurant:

Peri-peri chicken butterfly with spicy rice from Nando's.

Best friends in boxing:

[Unbeaten Belfastmen] Paul Hyland Jnr and Daniel McShane. We came through the amateurs together and now we're stablemates. I'm also close to my manager, Mark Dunlop. He's been a great help.

Other sportsman you would like to be:

A footballer. I used to be a goalkeeper.

Last film/TV show you saw:

Taken 3, starring Liam Nesson.



Who would play you in a film of your life:

My female fans say I look like Brad Pitt!

Have you ever been starstruck:

It was weird when I first sparred Carl Frampton a few years ago and Barry McGuigan complimented me. They're Irish boxing legends.

Last time you cried:

When I suffered my first defeat [a second-round stoppage against Pavels Senkovs in October 2013]. I was heartbroken, but I've learned from it.

Best advice received:

"The two things that'll define you are your patience when you have nothing, and your attitude when you have everything." That's what my manager told me.

Worst rumour about yourself:

That the major promoters won't make me a star because I'm based in Northern Ireland. That's rubbish. Belfast is one of the biggest fight cities.

Something not many people know about you:

I'm from a mixed-religion family. My mother's side are Catholic and my father's are Protestant. I wear the white dove on my shorts as a sign of peace between both religions in Northern Ireland. Through sport I'll unite!

FAST FACTS

Age: 21 **Twitter:** @James_Tenny_93 **Height:** 5ft 8ins **Nationality:** Northern Irish **From:** Belfast **Stance:** Orthodox **Record:** 11-1 (9) **Division:** Featherweight **Titles:** Irish super-featherweight **Next fight:** Tennyson faces Celtic feather champion Kris Hughes in a British title eliminator in Belfast on Saturday March 28.

[NEXT ISSUE ON SALE MARCH 10, 2015 (DIGITAL) AND MARCH 12, 2015 (PRINT)]

ESTABLISHED 1909 BOXING NEWS 30 Cannon St, London, EC4M 6YJ

TEL +44(0)20 7618 extension EMAIL firstname.surname@boxingnews.co.uk FAX 020 7618 3400 SUBSCRIPTIONS 01371 851 888 EMAIL boxingnews@escosubs.co.uk

PRODUCT EDITOR Danny Flexen 3098 CONTENT EDITOR Matt Christie 3069 ART EDITOR Nick Bond 3071 WRITERS John Dennen 3478, Paul Wheeler 3401 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER Zoltan Nagy 3471 ADVERTISING MANAGER Jez Walters 3484 BN SHOP Patricia Applewhaite 3411 CREATIVE ARTWORKER Reema Patel MARKETING MANAGER Dan Foley 3461

DIGITAL MARKETING ASSISTANT Tanika Callum 3472 PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Alex McLachlan 3077 MANAGING DIRECTOR Tim Whitehouse PRINTING Warners Midlands Plc

Regd. at the Post Office as a newspaper | Published by Newsquest Specialist Media Ltd – a Gannett Company | Newsquest Media Group, Loudwater Mill, Station Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP10 9TY

Distributed by Seymour Distribution Ltd, 86 Newman St, London W1T 3EX T 020 7396 8000

BOXING NEWS

NEWSQUEST
Specialist Media

recycle
When you have finished with
this magazine please recycle it.

ABC

Boxing News is audited by the
Audit Bureau of Circulation.

f

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/boxingnews.co.uk

Incorporating
FIGHTING FT

Exclusive offer – SAVE 25% now at boxingnewsshop.com/mayweather

THE ESSENTIAL FLOYD 'MONEY' MAYWEATHER SPECIAL AVAILABLE NOW



EXCLUSIVE OFFER! SAVE 25% on your print copy – only £7.49

Enter promo code **FLOYD25** at boxingnewsshop.com/mayweather

- Accounts of all his fights up to the pinnacle of his career against Saul Alvarez
- Tales from his victims who explain how he defeated them
- In the gym with the superstar, including his regime
- Tommy Hearn on how a fight between the pair would go
- And much, much more

ALSO AVAILABLE AS A DIGITAL VERSION – ONLY £6.99



NEW T-SHIRT RANGE OUT NOW!

FEATURING:

- MUHAMMAD ALI
- ROCKY MARCIANO
- MIKE TYSON
- JOE LOUIS
- AND MORE

NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE
BOXINGNEWSSHOP.COM